

THE  
LIGHT  
OF THE  
WORLD.

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The Third and Last part.

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CONTAINING  
*The Last Conferences*

WHICH  
M. ANTONIA BOURIGNON  
HAD WITH

The Deceast Mr. *CHRISTIAN de CORT*,  
Priest, Pastour of St. *John's* at *Mechlin*,  
Superiour of the Fathers of the *Oratory*  
there, and Directour of the *Isle of*  
*Neorestrandt*.

Which deserves to be Read, Understood, and Con-  
sidered by all who desire to be Saved.

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Written Originally in *French*.

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L O N D O N,  
Printed in the Year MDCXCVI.



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*Isaiah* 58. 10.

Thy Light shall arise in the midst of  
Darkness ; and thy Obscurity shall  
become as Noon-day.

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# To the READER.

**H**ERE is, FRIENDLY READER, the Third Part of the LIGHT OF THE WORLD, which is also the Last Conferences that I could have with this Zealous CHRISTIAN DE CORT, (Superiour of the Oratory, and Pastour of the Church St. John at Mechlin in Brabant) since to hinder him from having any more Conferences with me, they posson'd him, and so murther'd him, to hinder the Prosecution of the Pious Designes which he had to make known to the World the Truth of the Decay of CHRISTIANITY.

This Third Part shows yet more clearly than the Two foregoing, how much the Church of God is fallen from her first Institution, and how far she is remov'd from the Principles of the Apostles, and the Life of the First Christians; how many Errours and Corruptions have by little and little crept and slip into Christianity; what Appendages and Circumstances they have added to it; How many New Laws and Ordinances for the Ornament of it, which in effect have deform'd and disfigur'd it? So that whereas Christendom was in its Beginning The True Spouse of Jesus Christ, she is now become The great Whore, which commits whoredom with the Kings of the Earth, drinking in their Cups, and eating of their Dainties, which are the Ambition, the Pleasures, and covetous Desires of the Things of this World. Which Things are now as common among the Churchmen as among the Kings of the Earth, to say no more. This is very far from the Lowliness of Jesus Christ and of his Disciples, who lived in Humility of Heart, in a Contempt of the Honours and Glory of the World, and would take no other Delights but Labours, Fatigues and Sufferings; and despised Gold and Silver, as appears by the Offer that Simon the Sorcerer made to St. Peter, of giving him Money to buy the Grace of God: He curses him and his Money. And when they asked Alms of him, he says to the poor Man; Silver and Gold have we none, but the Power of God which will heal thee: And elsewhere they say; Freely we have received it, and freely we give it: And to shew the Poverty there was in the Colledge of the Apostles, we need but remark that they had not wherewith to pay the Tribute, since Jesus Christ sent them to catch a Fish in which they should find a Piece of Money to pay this Tax. Consider now, FRIEND-

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LY READER, if there be any Resemblance between the Churchmen of our Time, and the Colledge of the Apostles, and if every one does not strive to come by the Fattest Prebendaries, thirsting still insatiably for more Honour, Pleasures. and Riches, that they may Rule in this World, instead of Enduring and Suffering in it, in Imitation of their Master and Captain Jesus Christ, who says so clearly to them, I have done all to give you an Example, and, Be ye Followers of me.

But those Persons at present, do directly the contrary, despising Lowliness and Humility, abhorring Poverty, and avoiding Sufferings as much as they can. Are not these Adulterers who falsifie their Faith promised to Jesus Christ in Baptism to renounce the Devil, the World, and its Poms? And after their Oaths, they go and take up what they have renounced, conforming themselves to the World, and its Poms and Vanities, as much as they can: And in the mean time they will still bear the Name of Christians, which signifies, the Spouse of Jesus Christ: As in effect those Persons really were, if they had continued in his Spirit and the Imitation of Him. From which they being fallen, they are nothing now but unfaithful Wooremongers and Adulterers, worthy to be cast off by their Lawful Husband, as they infallibly shall be; for He cannot acknowledge them for Christians when He sees them in their Manners wholly Antichristian.

It must not be imagined that this Evil is only in the Roman Church, as all the Reformed would perswade themselves, calling the Roman Church commonly, The great Whore in the Revelation: since all and every one of these Reformed are more Whores than their Mother, the Roman Church, from which they have separated, not to Reform her, but to Deform her the more, by rendring her a greater Beast than she was in her self, For we see these Reformed live much more licentiously than those who continue in the Roman Church, who being under Discipline, are regulated and restrained in their Manners, whereas the Reformed being subject to none, live as Beasts, every one following his own Will and the Inclination of their corrupt Natures.

This is that which made all these Reformers to depart from the Roman Church, that they might make New Institutions, accommodated to their Looseness. For since they were resolved to give the Reins to their Brutish Senses, they could not abide any longer under the Obedience of a Superiour; and being inclined to follow Carnal Pleasures, they must depart out of the Roman Obedience, where they had taken Vows and Oaths of Chastity, for else they had been cast into Prison as perjured and  
impious:

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*impious: And that they might have Money enough to satisfy the Pleasures of their Taste, they must be followed by Rich Persons who might furnish them with Money in abundance. For this Cause they made Schisms in the Roman Church, and they Established New Churches every one after his own Fashion, who contradicted one another, and understood one another no more than the Builders of the Tower of Babel; and in this they were followed by many Honourable Persons, who thought there was some Good Thing in the Reformed, and so much the rather that they were agreeable to Corrupt Nature, which they flattered and nourished in its Vices. For these Reformers did not bid the People, separate from the Roman Communion, that they might live in Gluttony and Whoredom; This would have been too infamous and reproachful among Good Men; but they told them the Abuses of the Roman Church, proposing to reform them: Though in Truth it was but that they might lead a Licentious Life, shake off Piety and Truth, and give Loose Reins to the Motions of their Corrupt Nature, and let it follow its Desires and Inclinations without constraint.*

*For if they had designed a Pious Reformation, they would not have despised the Good Things that were in the Roman Church, and would only have resisted the Evil which they judged to be there, and Reformed that Evil first in themselves, that by their good Example they might have led others to Reform themselves too; since Example is an Effectual Preaching. But these Reformers proceeded after quite another manner, and rejected the Good with the Bad, without distinction: Because if they had maintained what was Good in the Roman Church, they would have been obliged to observe it them themselves. This they had no mind to do, being resolved to lead a Licentious Life, and to give Loose Reins to all their Brutish Senses. They could not subject the People to the Obedience of a Superiour, since they themselves would not at all depend upon one. Therefore first of all they perswaded the People to shake off a Dependance on the Pope and other Superiours, that they might live every one after their own Way, as the Beasts who have neither Fears nor Cares but eat and drink well. This is against all Decency; since no Country, no Common-wealth, no Family can be well ordered and governed without a Head, a Superiour, or a Father of the Family, to whom the rest are subject: And I pray you, FRIENDLY READER, what would a City or a Province be, if it had no Magistrate, no Superiour? No other thing but a Den of Thieves, Robbers, and other Malefactors,*



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who would hinder all Good Men from dwelling there. And though Superiority be so good, useful and necessary even in the Civil State, yet these Reformers reject it as an Evil Thing, and will depend on none but themselves, and live independently, that they may the more follow the Swinge of their Brutish Senses, whose Motions they let loose without Restraints. These Reformers did not only cast off Obedience by their Reformation; but also the Confession of Sins in particular: For they would not declare to another the Luxury and the Excess which they had a mind to perpetrate; and they could not enjoin others what they would not do themselves. Therefore they rejected, and even despised this Confession, though the Scripture sayes expressly, Confess your Faults to one another: And Confession in its self is Good and Holy, humbling the Heart, and serving for a Bridle and Restraint to Sin in Time coming. All this sort of Good these Reformers rejected, together with the pretended Errours they said they had discovered, forgetting that the Scripture says, Try all things, and hold that which is good.

I will not excuse the Errours and Abuses which have crept in among these Auricular Confessions; since I blame them more than these Reformers themselves did, as may be seen in this **LIGHT OF THE WORLD**: But they ought not to pluck up the good Grain with the Tares. That belongs to the Lord to separate them in the Day of Harvest, and not to these Reformers to come before the Time and pluck out of the Holy Church the good Things which Christ had planted there: Such as Fasting and Abstinence are, which these Reformers have so absolutely rejected and despised, though in the Scripture Fasting is recommended; for the Apostle sayes, Be ye sober, and watch: And elsewhere it is said, Sanctifie your Fast. And Jesus Christ speaking to his Apostles of one posselt. sayes to them, This kind goeth not out but by Fasting and Prayer. He himself fasted Forty Dayes in the Desert, and was an hungred. But these Reformers speak of nothing but filling their Belly well the better to excite their Lust. Are not these who would Reform the Roman Church, fine Zealots for the Glory of God? We see also that all their Reformation has brought nothing but Schisms and Divisions among the Reformed themselves. There is nothing there but Debates and Dissensions. They wrote to me some while agoe that Two Preachers of the same Reformed Communion had fallen by the Ears together even in the Temple, and the one had rent the others Garment from Head to Foot. These are the Effects of their Reformation, and of the Remedy they say they have.



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have provided for the Abuses of the Roman Church. The Scripture says, That the Tree is known by its Fruit. From whence we may infer how pernicious these Reformations must be, which have caused such Mischiefs in Christendom, having brought in nothing but Hatred among Christians, though Jesus Christ did so much recommend to them, To love one another. By these Reformations they have despised, hated and persecuted one another, beat, rob'd, kill'd and murdered one another without compassion, to maintain the Opinion that they have undertaken to believe, though all their Opinions be equally bad, the one erring one way, and the other another. So that to maintain the Errours of these Reformers these Christians kill'd and murder'd one another, instead of loving one another according to the Counsel of Jesus Christ. And these Enmities continue to this Day, and they hate and despise one another upon the Account of their Religion, though all of them signifie nothing, and no Religions can save any.

Nothing but the Love of God brings Salvation; and all these Persons love themselves only, and live all according to the Motions of Corrupt Nature: Their Religions consisting in nothing but Theory, and vain Speculations, not at all in Practice. But to flatter them with some Piety and Devotion; their Reformers have put the Bible in their Hands, and some Songs to sing in the Temple: since the Priests and Religious Romanists used to sing in the Temple, and corrupt Nature has no Repugnance to Songs; it rather delights in them, as all these Reformers do at this Day, who lift up their Voice as well as they can to make their good Voice be heard in the Temple, where they sit at their own Ease, with the Bible in their Hand, on which they profess to read that they may learn to discourse of it, though I have not known one Person who puts in practice so much as one Point of the Gospel. Lo this is all the Service that these Reformers have learned their Disciples together with the Lords Supper, that is performed without Devotion or Piety. And notwithstanding of this they call themselves good Christians, Evangelical Persons, Predestinated, or Regenerated Ones, and other good Names: Though they be as far from Salvation as Heaven is from Earth. But these Reformers have known so well how to persuade them of an Imaginary Salvation by their Scholastick Reasons and Glosses, that they have thereby so confounded their Spirit, as that they receive Lyes for the Gospel.

That which is most to be admired, is, that among so many Persons of Understanding who have followed these Reformers, none have perceived the Cheat of these Sensual Reformers, who teach a Life  
quite

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quite contrary to the Evangelical Life, which speaks of nothing but denying a Mans Self, bearing down his Flesh, and doing Penitence, with a Threatning that without this Mean we shall all perish. It must indeed be said, That from that time Men have been abandoned to the Spirit of Errour and Lying, and that Mens Spirit has been quite blinded by Sin, and is since still more blinded; since yet in our Time we see Persons of a like Temper list up themselves above others, and call themselves the Reformers and Restorers of Israel, and separate from the rest of the Reformed, that they may live separate from the World in greater Holiness than others: Though in their Manners they be as sensual, yea more, than those whom they have forsaken. For having no Accommodation of Worldly Goods, and being unwilling to Work, but desirous to be well Treated and Served, they undertake Reformations, drawing over to them Wealthy Persons that they may obtain their Aims, and they make all their Goods common: In which the Poor cannot but have Advantage, and the Reformers Services, and a good Time of it, according to their Aim; since in effect many follow them, and give them all their Wealth, with which they Eat and Drink and Marry as those did in the Days of Noah: On which Terms they make them Preachings of Fine Studied Words and fitted for the Gust of the Hearers, who are well pleased to have found out a way of Salvation so well accommodated to their Corrupt Natures: since they make them believe, that they are all ruled by King Jesus. They are persuaded by their frivolous Discourses that this is true, and thus Men are yet amused by Men as they were in former Times.

And I can see no other Remedy but that God overturn all these Churches made with Mens Hands, that he may establish one made of Spirit and of Life, where we shall worship God in Spirit and in Truth. Which he makes me hope shall come to pass very shortly; since he makes me declare so many Truths with the hazard of my Life to overturn Babel and revive True Christianity. Blessed shall he be who shall receive them from God's Hand, and shall not resist the Truth as Jannes and Jambres did; since these are undone for ever: But receive the saving Truth that God has communicated to me in this **LIGHT OF THE WORLD**, which will illuminate your Soul. In the mean time, I remain,

Friendly Reader,

Your very Affectionate in Jesus Christ,

ANTHOINETTE BOURIGNON.

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# THE LIGHT of the WORLD

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## The third Part.

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### The first Conference.

*Declares that God has never demanded any other thing of man but the dependance of his Will on Gods ; and that all other Laws are given him by Accident, and to discover his Sins.*

**H**AVING been absent for some time from this illuminated Soul, I went to find her again to entreat her to pray for me, and to tell her I was resolved more than ever to resign my self wholly to God, that I might receive his Divine Light.

She said, Sir, as soon as you shall make this Renunciation of your self, and shall deliver up into God's Hand the Freewill that he has given you, you shall receive the Holy Spirit, which will teach you all things. But never turn back again to resume your own will ; otherwise the last Fault will be worse than the first : Since you have now received more Light than formerly, walk according to it, and do not any more regard the World, nor the Creatures, for they

cannot save you. You must fall into the Hands of God (a) whether you will or no: No body can escape this, whether he live well or ill, he shall have no other Judge. 'Tis a very small matter for us to yield to God the free will that he has so freely given us; since 'tis his Property, and he has entrusted it in our Hands only for our Benefit. Shall we procure our own Misery with the greatest Present that God has ever given us? Since we have so often experienc'd that we always abuse this Free-will, (b) employing it rather for our Damnation, than for our Salvation; Let us acknowledge, Sir, our weakness, and resign our Free-will into the Hands of God, that he may dispose of it at his Pleasure during this short Life. He will give it back to us in the other, with such Perfections that we shall not be able to abuse it any more. Do not delay longer, Sir, so much as one day to make this transferring of your Free-will to God: For in this consists (c) all Perfection, all the Law and the Prophets, and Life everlasting: For all Vertues, the Old Law, and the New, are no other but true means to attain to this Resignation of our Free-will to that of God: in doing this we fulfill all things, we need not be solicitous for any more.

I said to her, I was greatly comforted to understand, that to fulfill the whole Law we need only resign our own Will to that of God, and that I heartily resigned it.

She said, Sir it is most certain that God has never demanded any other thing of Man (d) but the resignation of his Will to his, and only gave him Laws and Precepts (e) when he saw Man withdraw himself from him, to follow his own Will, by which he is fallen into all sorts of Sins and Miseries; and fearing lest through Ignorance and Inadvertence, he should dye and perish in his Sins, God gave him Laws and Precepts that Man might know Sins, and abstain from committing them: Otherwise Man (f) would

(a) Ps. 139. 7. 12. (b) Ib. 66. 3. 4. (c) Job. 6. 38. (d) Pr. 12. 30. 26. 29. Ib. 35. 13. (e) Wisd. 12. 2. (f) 1 Tim. 2. 14.



## Conf. I. Of Resignation and dependance.

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never have needed any Laws in case he had continued in a dependance on the Will of God: He might have done all that he pleased, and enjoyed all things Created for his Use, and that even with delight. By which you may see, Sir, that it is sufficient for Man to resign himself to the Will of God, tho' he should not follow any means appointed for the Attainment of these Ends, as the Commandments of the Church are, he will assuredly be saved; yea, though he were a *Turk* or a Heathen, (b) or of any Sect or Nation whatsoever: Because God has never given any other Law to Man, but the DEPENDANCE that he ought always to have upon his God: And all the Laws are occasioned by Sin, and their Goodness consists in the (i) discovery of it, that this knowledge may withdraw Man from it, and remove from him all these Sins, which prove hindrances of this Resignation to God: For if Man had no Sins which turn him away from God, he would certainly be resigned to him: For he is created for this, that God may take Delight in him, (k) without any resistance, and that he may accomplish all his Will in Man (l) with his free Consent and Will, which is the most perfect thing of all that can be imagined; for if Man were united in Will to God, he would partake of all his Qualities; and as God is the Fountain of all Good, Man would be also all Good; and all Just, because united to the true Righteousness; and also all true, being conformable to the Eternal Truth; and consequently he would fulfil all the Laws by this sole Resignation to God. without his needing to learn or follow them in particular, they being all comprehended and summ'd up in the inseparable DEPENDANCE of our Will on that of God.

I said to her, *That my Soul was ravished with Pleasure to understand that God demands no other thing of Man, but the submission of his Will to that of his God, and that by this means I hoped many would yet be Saved; whereas (according to her Discourses) I had sometimes despaired of all, and of my self also.*

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(g) Ps. 37. 4, 5. (h) Act. 10. 34. (i) Gal. 3., 17. (k) Prov. 8. 31. (l) If. 1. 19.



*She said,* You had reason for that despair, because we see no body in our times who has his Will resign'd to that of God, except in Words, which (m) perform nothing in effect; but it is most certain, that if a Heathen who never heard of God nor of his Laws, should consider by his natural Judgment that there is a God who governs all things; and if he should resign himself to this God, unknown to him, taking from his Hands all that befalls him, acknowledging him the Author of all Good; resolving with the consent of his Will to yield himself to be ruled and governed by him; (n) such a Heathen would be a Saint, though he should not observe any of the Commands in particular, because he would observe them all in general, without knowing it; for he who is resign'd to the Government of God (\*) can never do Evil, nor commit Sin, unless he withdraw himself from this Government to follow his own Will. I would believe that there are yet some Persons scattered up and down the World who have resigned their Wills to the Will of God; but taking the generality of the World, and considering how men govern themselves, it is manifest enough that no body resigns his Will to that of God; for we see nothing but self-will reigns every where: From thence it comes that so many Sins are committed. We see the self-will of all Men bear sway in all things with the same affectation, for they esteem nothing more than their own Will; they seek and follow it as much as is possible for them, in eating and drinking, and in all other bodily things, in Sciences, and in the choice of Estates, and Dignities, and in all things that give Contentment to the Mind, yea, even in pious and spiritual Exercises, they are done according to the desire and inclination of Self-will, and no otherwise; for if our Will were resigned to God, it would not seek; it self in any thing, neither in small things nor in great: For one who is truly resign'd does not any more possess himself: He takes and receives all that God is pleased to give him, and is most content with what he thinks fit to deprive him of. This is very far from the practice of

(m) 1 Cor. 4. 20. (n) Math. 8. 10, 11. (\*) Ps. 37. 5, 6.

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Men now, who would willingly set themselves against the Will of God, if it were possible for them, in all that he permits to befall them against their own Will; yea, even though they be Persons consecrated to God by solemn Vows, we discover and find them to be so wedded to their own Wills and Inclinations, that all their Actions as well good as bad, are nothing but a constant course of Self-Love, which never ends till Death, and even sometimes follows them after it by Legacies or Testaments made according to this Self-will; and nevertheless they believe, and all the World owns, that they are the Servants of God, entirely dedicated to him, without observing what Jesus Christ says, *that (o) to be his Disciple a Man must deny himself*: By which words he explains to us what this DEPENDANCE on God ought to be; for the whole Law of the Gospel is nothing else but the Explication of the dependance that we ought to have on the Will of God: And when he says, *Deny your selves*, this is nothing else but to say, *Resign your selves to God*, because he who follows himself, hinders God from ruling over him; so all the other Precepts of Jesus Christ are but to point out to us the means by which we may attain to this Resignation of our Will to God's; for when Jesus Christ says, *(p) Renounce all that you possess*; This is not that God has need of Silver, or other Possessions, but because Man has so set his Affections on what he possesses in this World, that he would not be content that God should take them from him, and as long as he has a desire to possess them, he cannot be resign'd to the Will of God, for he has yet his own: And when Jesus Christ says *(q) Take up your Cross, and follow me*; this is also to lead us to this Resignation of our Will to that of God; for being all good, he cannot do Evil to any, nor take Pleasure in making us suffer; but he who will not endure the Pains and Crosses that shall befall him, cannot be resign'd to God, for he does not willingly suffer, though his Sins have deserv'd it. And when Jesus Christ says, that we must *(r) cut off the Foot, or*

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(o) *Math. 16. 24.* (p) *Luk. 14. 33.* (q) *Luk. 9. 33.* (r) *Mat. 5. 29.*

*pluck out the Eye that offends us; It is not that God has need of any of the Members of our Body, but to teach us that he who is resign'd to the Will of God, ought willingly to lose his Foot or his Eye, yea, his Life when God shall permit it; for he who has resign'd his Will to the Will of God, has no more any Care of, or respect to himself, suffering himself to be entirely governed by God, independently from his own Will. And because we did not comprehend sufficiently how this dependance ought to be, and were so far removed from it; Jesus Christ came upon Earth to explain to us by what means we ought to recover it; for all his Precepts are only means to attain to it.*

*I asked her, how we might know when we are wholly resign'd to God, and what our Liberty and free-will is yielded up to his disposal.*

*She said, Sir it is very easie to know this; for he who has truly yielded up his Free-will to God, will use it (x) no more, but deny all that it demands, even to the least things; he yields no longer to it in any thing, but waits on God for all that he must have, having no more to yield up to him but this Free-will, he only receives from God without acting in any thing. Such a Person performs all his Actions in dependance on God, if he eats and drinks it is nothing but out of pure Necessity; without regarding whether it be sweet or sour, all is good to him, provided it be wholesome and sufficient for the maintenance of his Life: He seeks neither Ease, Pleasures, Honours, Riches, nor any Earthly Contentment; and if any of these things occur, he takes them indifferently from God's Hand, for he has no longer any desire of his own. He neither desires Honour, Estate, Riches, nor any thing that delights the Mind, knowing well that it is not in this Life that one must take his Contentment, no more than Jesus Christ did while he was on Earth: On the contrary, he finds in his Soul a willingness (u) to suffer Reproaches, Pain, and Labour, though contrary to his natural Inclination. A Soul dead to it self, and resign'd to the Will of God, neither seeks good, nor even Vertues,*

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(x) *Mat. 26. 39.* (u) *2 Cor. 12. 10.*

## Conf. I. Of Resignation and Dependence

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but those which God will give it, and affects no means to obtain them; but is well contented to be most ignorant, and stript of all sorts of Sciences, and means even of perfection. In one word, Sir, a person who has yielded up his free will to God, desires no longer any thing on Earth, and expects only what it shall please God to permit or send him, receiving Prosperity and Adversity with an even mind, without Joy or Grief, since he believes, That (\*) God will not permit any thing to befall him but what shall turn to his good. All these are signs to know whether we be resign'd to God, or not; for we must not flatter our selves, in saying that we are resign'd to God, while we live wholly to our own wills, and follow, as much as we can, our own inclinations.

I said to her, That I never knew any on Earth who was so resign'd to God as to take all from his hands, and to have no self-will, on occasions; tho' many pretend, that they will live wholly to God, and do his will.

She said, Sir, Do you not see, that these are all Cheats, and that those who say, they would please God, and do his will, deceive themselves, in believing, that God is pleas'd with their words, without effect. If you never knew any person, who yielded up to God the free will that he gave him, you may well say, that you know none in a state of salvation: for no man can be saved (y) who follows his own will. For Adam committed no other sin to undo us, but the following his own will: The matter of eating an Apple was not sufficient to cause all the miseries under which we yet groan. That which ruin'd the Children of Israel was nothing else but (z) that they would not be contented with the Government and Will of God, desiring rather to suffer the miseries of Egypt, in doing their own wills, than to enjoy the delights they had while they Resign'd themselves to God. VVhen all the world perish'd by an universal Deluge, it was because every one was more bent to follow his own will, than to submit to the word that God proclaimed by Noah. And when the Jews were given up to the Spirit of Error, it was for no other Reason but that they valued more their own will, than the light that God sent them to receive; and know His. By

(x) Rom. 8. 28. (y) Isa. 66. 4. (z) Psalm 81. 12, 13.



which we may see, that in all Times and Ages God has always demanded the Submission of Man's Will to his own, and has rejected all those who follow their own Will. Do you believe, Sir, that it will not be thus with Christians and all the World now? It is certainly the very same thing, for God never changes. What he required from Adam, he certainly requires from all his Posterity. We are mistaken if we think to deceive him now with formal Words and Discourses, saying that *we will be resigned to him, and do his Will*, when in effect we will only follow our own on all occasions. This is one deceit among others, which are crept into Christendom, to make all the World Perish: For no body knows what it is to be resign'd to God, while every one says, he is; and on this false perswasion, they insensibly destroy themselves.

## The second Conference.

*Of Free Will, That it is the only thing which represents in Man the Infinity and Liberty of God; That the greatest Gift which God has given to Man, is, to love him freely and infinitely, which is the greatest Perfection in Grace, figured by that of Marriage in Nature.*

I said to her, *since our own Will is so dangerous, it were to be wish'd we had never receiv'd it.*

*She said, Sir, what Blasphemy do you utter against the Goodness of God, who (a) has given us this Free-will as the most precious thing that ever was; for by it we are made like (b) to God, whereas otherwise we should be nothing but limited Creatures, in whom*

(a) 4 Esd. 8. 56. (b) Gen. 1. 27.



God could not take Pleasure? To desire that we had no Free-Will, would be to despise extreamly the Treasures of God, since it was purposely given us that we might (c) be the more united to him, without which we could not be the Images of God, because we should have had no resemblance of him, without this Free-will, which makes us (d) *Little Gods*, without which all Men would be but Filth: For, according to their Nature alone, they are more miserable than the Beasts. Could God take delight in a thing so unlike to himself, could so powerful a God unite himself to such an Impotent Creature, who had not Free-will to love him? God having no bounds nor limits, could he take Pleasure in a Creature whose Will was bounded, and could a limited Will attain to the Love of a God without limits? How could a finite Being love an infinite? There would be no proportion there, and if Likeness beget Love, how could a being so vastly different be united in Affection? God who (\*) has made all his Creatures so perfect, even to the least Creature that ought to serve for the use of Man, would he have made Man so imperfect, who ought to serve for his own delight? In this there would be neither Justice nor Goodness, and Man alone might lament and bewail his misfortune, who would find himself destitute of all the qualities requisite for the end for which he was Created, that is, to love his God. And this Free-will which is given him for this Love only, can it be blamed, or despised, because we abuse it? It had been better we had never been Created, than to have been without our Free-will, which is the greatest Good that the Goodness of God could bestow upon us. Would we not judge a Father very cruel, who having great Wealth and Treasures, would not give them to his Children, and who, because some of them had abused them, would leave all the rest in Poverty, and give all his Wealth to Strangers? Can we wish that God had done us this Injustice to deny us our Free-will, since there was a necessity he should give it to some? Are we not his true Children, since he has

(c) *Pf.* 40. 9. see 2 *Cor.* 8. 8. (d) *Act.* 17. 28, 29. (\*) *Deut.* 32. 4. (e) *Pf.* 110. 3.

said, (f) *Let us make Man after our Likeness?* We are thereby made his Legitimate Children, resembling him more than any other Creatures; and therefore his greatest Treasures belong to us, among which Free-will is the chief, and most precious Good. If some abuse it, (h) it is their own Fault. God has always exercis'd the Justice and Goodness of a true Father, in giving it to us, we are to blame if we will abuse it; for these Benefits ought never to be upbraided to any: A Son, who has waisted all his Patrimony, ought to smite his own Breast, (i) acknowledging his Fault, without ever believing that it comes from the Goodness and Equity of his Father, who on his part has done him all the good he could; but he ought to beg pardon for having thus abus'd his Favours. All those who say they would have wish'd rather not to have had Free-will, are unworthy to be call'd the Children of God, for they impute to him the Fault which they commit themselves. This is a quality of the Devil, always to blame others for the faults which they do themselves, and to accuse the Good of their own wickedness. And to wish we had never receiv'd Free-will, is to wish never to have been a Child of God, and indirectly to blame him for the Faults which we commit in abusing his Graces. This is a great contempt of God, that deserves a double Punishment, one for the Ingratitude that we commit against God, and another for having thus abus'd his Benefits. And as a Beast is not capable of knowing the Beauty and value of a precious Stone, so Man would have been a brutish Animal if God had not given him an Understanding to comprehend, and a Free-will to love Him, without which he would be as incapable of knowing and loving God, as a Beast is of a Jewel, which surpasses its Capacity. And yet they would wish that this Free-will, which is the only advantage of Man, had not been given him! what Ingratitude to take such inestimable Favours of God for a Misfortune!

I said to her, *That I intended not to despise the Gifts*

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(f) Gen. 1. 26. (g) *Abt.* 17. 18. (h) 4 *Esd.* 8. 56. (i) Luk. 16. 8.

of God, by saying, that it had been desirable he had not given this free-will to Man: *but I only consider'd, that by it Man so easily ruin'd himself.*

*She said,* Sir, by all these humane Sentiments every one Blasphemes against God; 'tis no wonder that the Whore in the Revelation is (k) full of names of Blasphemy, since Blasphemies are so common in the Christian Church, which she represents: They esteem that good which God reckons to be Evil, and they hold that to be Evil which God counts good; yea, his most holy and perfect Works are rejected or despis'd by Men, which is evident by your present Sentiments: since it seems to you, it had been better not to have received Free-will from God; that is to say, by way of Reproof to him, that he had done better not to have given it to Man. Do we not shew by this, that we would be God's Masters, and Directors, to teach him his Duty, and correct him, by saying, he had done better not to have given this Free-Will? To what is Man come, that silly Worm of the Earth, who would give orders to so wise and powerful a God? Is it enough for Man to excuse himself by saying, *That he considers only the ill use that is made of these Graces of God,* without applying his Mind to consider that the VWorks of God are always good, just, and true; and that all the Evil that can ever be found in them, proceeds only from the wickedness of Man, who abusing the Favours of God, makes use of his Graces to offend him. It were better to have a Sentiment that reproves Man for this wickedness, than one that reproves God in his VWorks; as Men do now, who judging with carnal Eyes, condemn the goodness and righteousness of God. 'Tis more than time, Sir, that he should take order with so many evils, without suffering any longer so many Blasphemies as are daily utter'd against him, and wherein even the Holy judge sinistrously of the most holy and perfect of his VWorks. It must needs be that all things be very shortly overturned; for no body knows God any more, nor his VWorks.

*I acknowledged my Fault in having so often spoke evil*



of the Works of God, saying to her, that it was only thro' Ignorance, and not thro' Malice.

She said, Sir, Ignorance excuses not Sin. You are always obliged to know that God is a perfect Good, from whom no Evil can ever proceed; and that all his Works are accompanied with Truth, and all sorts of Perfections: And that he can never do any (l) imperfect thing; and therefore you ought not to wish that any thing were otherwise than he has appointed it; for all the Wise Men who are, were, or shall be upon the Earth, cannot have all together the least Wisdom of God, and all that they have, they have from him. Is not this general Rule sufficient to make your Spirit submit to these Ordinances, especially as to this free-will of Men, which he has given them as a Pledge of assurance that they are his real Children, in acknowledgment of which they ought to bless and praise him day and night, because he could never testify more Love to them than by this liberty he has given them to love him. For my part I can say in truth, that I would chuse rather that God should annihilate me than take from me the Liberty to love him. Therefore I resent it so much when I hear it said, *That it would be better not to have Free-will*; for I feel by Experience that it is the only thing that unites Men to God, and that also which (n) can make them enjoy Eternal Happiness; no body can comprehend (but he who experiences it) what Consolation the Soul receives (p) when it can unite this Free-Will to God. This is so perfect an Alliance, that nothing can be found in Grace more accomplish'd, no more than there can be any thing found in Nature more perfect, than that two Persons united in their Wills in God, join also in Body, this compleats their Contentment; but if there were force, limitation or constraint on either side, the Pleasure could not be compleat. This is the Figure of the perfectly free Union that the Soul ought to have with God; and if the Soul were constrain'd, or forc'd to this union, God could not take perfect delight in it,

(l) *Dent.* 32. 4. *Pf.* 33. 4. (m) *Vvifd.* 9. 6, 17. (n) *If.* 1. 19. (o) *1 Cor.* 2. 14. (p) *Cant.* 7. 12. 8. 6, 7.  
because

because to have a compleat Contentment in the Union of two things, they must needs, equally concur to it.

I said to her, *That I must confess I had been in great Darknes, and that I had never conceiv'd that so great a Good did proceed from Free-will, no more than the happiness which is found in Marriage, when two Persons are united in Body and in Mind.*

*She said,* This is because People consider things only superficially, and on the outside, without piercing into their Sources, for, (q) it is the Free-will of Man only that gives him a perfect Union with God, without which he could never come to love him perfectly, therefore among all the Spiritual Graces that God has imparted to him, this Free-Will is the greatest good, as also Marriage among natural Goods is the most perfect; though Men do very frequently abuse both, making use of their Free-Will to damn themselves, and of Marriage to sin. This is not God's Fault, who has ordained both the one and the other holy and perfect; but only Man's, who abuses the most perfect Gifts of God, as well in Grace as in Nature. Ought we for this to desire that he had not bestowed these Graces on Man? This would be to own that Man's Wickedness should make the Goodness of God to cease, which cannot be, for God will never cease to be good, because Man is evil. He remains still the Fountain of all Goodness(r) and the giver of all Good, though the men of the World be wicked. God will never change for the Goodness or Wickedness of Men, nor for any other thing, because he continues always that which he is. Let Man do what he will, with all the other Creatures, they shall never be able to make God desist from the least Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth, which he possesseth in himself, and will always exercise without regard to the goodness or wickedness of Men. Their abuse(s) of his Graces will never hinder him from extending his Goodness towards them: If they use them well, they shall receive the promised reward,

(q) *Deut.* 30. 19. *Eccles.* 5. 17, 18. (r) *Jam.* 1. 17.

(s) *Lam.* 3. 22. *Math* 5. 45.



and if they they use them ill, they shall meet with the just Punishment, without any mutability in God. It pleased God to Create Man after his Likeness, and so he was made, for God's Power is equal (r) to his Will; and he would have this Man also joined to his Like, as God was to him, that is to say, entirely, spiritually, and bodily. Now Man could not be like to God by his humanity; for God was not corporeal or natural; neither could he be like to God by a bounded and limited Will and Spirit, because God has a free Power to do, or not to do any thing: God then must needs have given to Man the same free Power of his Will, or otherwise he could not be like to him in any thing. And since he would create Man after his own Likeness, he was obliged to give him the free disposal of his own will, there being nothing else in which he could resemble God. By which we see that Free-Will is the greatest spiritual Gift that Man has receiv'd from God, since without it he could not any way resemble Him. And afterwards to render this resemblance most compleat, God took a natural Body, and a reasonable Soul, like to Man, that he might in all respects resemble him, that is divinely by the free Power of his Will, and after the manner of Man, by the Body and Soul which Jesus Christ assumed in due time, that not only Man might be like God, but that also God might be like to Man, that there might be a perfect and compleat Contentment between God and Man, which will appear after the end of all Evil; when God shall reign with Men on Earth, Divinity and Humanity together joining themselves inseparably by an indissoluble and eternal alliance of Will, Body, and Spirit, by a perfect Bond and Union. This is the final Cause for which God became Man, that they might dwell together in an Eternal holy Union, the figure of which he shew'd in the Earthly Paradise when he created the Woman to give *Adam* (u) his compleat and perfect contentment; for though indeed he had been created with his Free-will to be able to love God, and take delight in him,

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(r) *Wisd.* 2. 18. (u) *Gen.* 12. 13.

and also in all the Creatures which were made subject to him, yet his Contentment was not fully perfect; for God was to be the delight of his Soul, and all the other Creatures of his Senses. But his Body did not see its like; therefore God says, (x) *It is not good for Man to be alone, let us make a help like to him*: Because God will make all his Works perfect in all respects. He is not satisfied to have created *Adam* in the enjoyment of his Free-will, by which he might have his VWill united to God's; he gives him also all beautiful things to recreate his Sight, and all savoury things to recreate his taste; all pleasant things for his hearing; all things necessary for his Entertainment, and he will needs also give him a Companion suitable to his Person, that both as to Body and Soul, he might have perfect Contentment, compleat in all respects, therefore he instituted Marriage, that the Souls which are united together by will in God, might be also united in Body; and that Man by this Figure might see how compleat and perfect the Union must be that he must have with God in all respects, and without any defect.

### The Third Conference.

*Speaks of the Perfection, and of the abuse of Marriage.*

I said to her that *Marriage* was very holily instituted, but that it was very ill observ'd because no body observes narrowly the works of God.

She said, Sir, this (y) is the cause why the VWorld is condemned: for God is no longer known nor lov'd.

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(x) *Gen. 2. 18. (y) Isa. 5. 12, 13.*

in it : and no body is sensible of this Fault. They use their Free-will to satisfy themselves ; every one willing and desiring that which is pleasant to his Senses, or advantageous for his Interest in this VWorld. They will all that which God does not will ; and notwithstanding they hope to be saved, and make a contrary use of all that God has given us. Marriage is a Holy thing, and may well be called a *Sacrament*, for God has instituted it ; and all that he has done is Sacred and Holy. But what do we see in the use of this Sacrament, but the Sin of Lust and filthiness, people carrying more disorderly in it than the Brute Beasts ? They joyn Bodies, when their Desires and Wills are far divided. The ends for which God instituted it are no longer regarded by married Persons. It is their only desire to satisfy their Lust or Avarice. For the rest they only mind it but by accident. And as there is nothing more holy and perfect than the Bond of Marriage for two Persons who have dedicated their Wills to God, because it unites three things which make now but one, to wit, the will of God, and the wills of the Married Persons, who by excess of their united VVills unite also Bodies in the Spirit and Design of God ; so on the contrary, there can be nothing more wicked than two Bodies united by Carnal Concupiscence : for this Alliance is the source of all sorts of Sins, yea, the Abyss of all Evils : And as those who are united to God, have, by being married with a Person equally united to God, a perfect Contentment both of Soul and Body ; so those who live after their own will, have, by marrying with their Like, still some discontent both of Body and Soul, because their Souls not being in God they cannot have Peace, and their Bodies being joyn'd without Love, cannot be satisfied nor contented, but they are in Body and Soul as in a temporal Hell, which prepares the way to Hell Eternal ; for these Bodies united without Souls and VVills can produce nothing but Sin through the Lust of the Flesh, besides Contention and Strife, with a thousand other kinds of Excess, Vain-glory, Luxury, gluttony, to which Married Persons excite one another. So that their whole Life is nothing but a constant

course

course of sinning, which extends also to their children, thro' the bad example of the Parents, who train them up in evil customs, and they increase the number of the wicked. Hereby the world grew still worse, and its wickedness is still increased, and the perverse generation is become so numerous, that the Evil is without Remedy; for nobody is aware of it, because every one treads the same path; Custom is changed into Nature. And whereas they ought to marry for the Two Ends that God gave them; that is, to preserve a perfect Unity among his true Children, and to increase the number of them by generation, they usually marry to satisfy their Concupiscence; and so they beget Children for the profit of the Devil. Thus the works of God are perverted by evil practices; for of all that God has done in Nature, there is nothing more holy than the Matrimonial Conjunction, which by a perfect Union binds persons in Love: for otherwise, God might have made men engender as the Fishes, or in any other separate manner, which his Almighty Power and Wisdom could have provided for. But resolving to have in Nature a figure of the Union of his *Sup* Three Powers, and of the entire and perfect Alliance *Sim.* which he would make with man, he ordain'd, that their generation should be by the conjunction of two persons; that he might keep them always inseparably united to his will in body and will, by a Bond of Charity; and gave them a natural bent and inclination to this conjunction, which is the most perfect thing in the world, if it were observed in the spirit of charity.

I said to her, *That it must be acknowledg'd no body understood the works of God, and that they made an ill use of all, especially of this Matrimonial Conjunction, from whence so many sins did proceed; and instead of regarding it as an holy thing, it was matter of shame and blushing amongst the most sober persons.*

*She said, Sir, 'Tis sin that renders it shameful, even as that of Adam made him see his Nakedness (z), and gave him ground, thro' confusion, to hide and cover himself. If he had remain'd in innocency, he would never have been ashamed of being Naked; but it was his sin only*



that caused this shame: He had no need of covering himself before he sinn'd, for his body was more beautiful, and more artificially contriv'd than ever the most costly Stuffs, with which he could cover himself; but the imagination being disorder'd by sin, made him see beautiful things as if they had been filthy. This has remain'd even till now in the imagination of all men, who esteem that to be good and beautiful which they imagine to be so; and reckon that also to be filthy and evil which seems so to their imagination. Hence it comes that they look on natural things as shameful; but if they regarded them in Truth and Innocence, all would seem good and beautiful to them; for God could never make any thing evil; but man perverts all good into evil, and by his sin corrupts all things; the most innocent become the most wicked by sin. It must be acknowledged, Sir, that the way in which men now joyn for generation, is very filthy, and makes chaste souls blush, because they observe nothing there but the sin which is in it, which is infamous. For this cause they are asham'd of it: But if this sin were remov'd, they would see nothing in it but what is pleasant; as if two little children should play together quite naked; there would be nothing but pleasure in this, because of their innocence; but if they did the same things when grown up, it would be infamous, because of the malignity of their thoughts. A thing that is in it self the same, is render'd good or evil by the wickedness of the Heart. The sins that are committed in Marriage, do not proceed from its being evil in its self; for it is good: but they are introduc'd there thro' the perverse will of men. Even as the Church is holy in it self, but man's perverse will has render'd it abominable in the sight of God; for they have chang'd the Order into which God had established it. And if men commit the greatest sins by the inclination they have to this natural conjunction, this proceeds from nothing but the wickedness of the Heart, since the thing in it self is good and holy. If man is become so negligent as to abuse all the works of God, is it not thro' his own wickedness that he perishes, tho he lays the blame always on God? For if he sin through Carnal Lust, he will say, *wherefore has God given me this Natural Inclination, by which I am led to sin?* And if men be chastised by any

any Rods, they will say, that God afflicts them; or that he has forsaken them; and so of all other things: How great soever mens wickedness be, they lay the blame always on God; tho they do not say it by word, yet they do it in deed, while they neglect to discover, that all his works are still <sup>(a)</sup> accompanied with Righteousness, Goodness and Truth; and that nothing that is evil can ever come from God, who is the <sup>(b)</sup> Source and Original of all Good, still doing good to all, without excepting any. By which we see evidently, that he is no longer known at present; for they abuse all his Favours, and blaspheme him in every thing, and yet are not willing to confess it; for every one of these Christians have it in their mouths, that they love God and honour him; <sup>(c)</sup> while truly and in effect they disown and blaspheme him by their works.

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(a) *Psal.* 36. 9, 10. (b) *Jany.* 1. 17. (c) *Tit.* 1: 16

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### The Fourth Conference.

*Of the blindness of men, who amuse themselves with the outward things which are delivered to them, without searching into the depth of the Truth it self, they are so infatuated and withheld, thro' the fear of displeasing those who are in Reputation.*

I said to her, That men were in horrible darkness, and that the Truth was no longer known, but every one had forsaken it, and taken a quise contrary way, while in the mean time they think they are in the right way.

She said, Sir, This is what I bewail continually, to see men so far from their salvation, and yet they think they are in the right way to it. This causes the Damnation

tion of those who are esteem'd the best men; for while they think they are good, they will not endeavour after a Change, but will live and die in a presumption of being sav'd without good works; which shall not be forgiven neither in this world nor in the other: and no body thinks 'on't; for the darkness is so thick, that they cannot see whither they go. Truth is always bright, and discovers every thing, but it is no longer known. No body knows the Truth any more, since the Devil spread this horrible Darkness on the Earth; but every one walks in darkness, and believes he is in the right way; and while they are perishing they think to be saved. Have you not observ'd, Sir, all that I have said to you, that man knows not God any longer, nor his works; and that they understand them in a quite contrary sense, and that in truth they observe nothing of what God has commanded, and Jesus Christ taught, and yet every one says, that he desires to come to God? Must there not be a lie in the one, or the other of these two contrary things? For what I say, and what Men do, are as distant from one another, as heat is from cold. Nevertheless truth cannot change, it remains always true: Let Men say what they please, let them stray from it, or approach it, it abides still firm in its Integrity. Who that understands me aright can doubt that I speak the Truth? And if you are oblig'd to confess it, will you not consequently be oblig'd to acknowledge that all the World is deceived, and fallen from the Truth, and in forsaking it they have forsaken God? And if they have forsaken God who can uphold them any longer? The World must certainly perish, for its disease is at the height; and the worst of all is, that they do not know it; for if they knew it, there would yet be some among them, who would open their Eyes, and perceive the reality of Truth.

*I ask'd her, from whence this great blindness of Spirit, and this so obscure darkness could proceed?*

*She said, Sir, this comes from the Devil, since he crept into the Church, and began to countermine the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and took the title of Anti-christ; he has labour'd so strongly in this, that he has spread among them an universal Darkness, and so confounded the Spirits of those Christians with so ma-*

ny different things, that they are no longer capable of knowing the Truth. Instead of it he has inspir'd them with a great many false Opinions, that he might divert them from the pure Truth. So that I do not believe there is any Sect or Nation in the World farther from it than the Christians of this Age, because they discover it no longer in any thing: whereas the Hereticks, Jews, or Heathens, know the Truth in some things, tho in others they are mistaken: but these Christians are mistaken in all, thro' the ill use they make of all things, as I have formerly told you, Sir, that they know neither God nor any of his works, judging of all in a quite contrary sense. And because they could not have quiet without doing good things, the Devil has furnish'd them with so many seemingly good works, that they have no longer any leisure to think of the Truth, and to examine whether these New Devotions be true or not: but they blindly follow them without making any other Reflection, but that they are the Ordinances of the Church; without examining also, whether this Church be holy or not, they lay aside the Truth to receive that which is proposed to them, supposing it to be a good thing. Hence (d) there is such blindness of spirit, and such obscure darkness, that there is scarce any way to make them see the Truth, their understanding being so preoccupied and darkned with diverse things, that they can no longer consider the Unity of Truth; on the contrary, they would think they did evil to follow this Truth, and quit the New Practices introduc'd by men. So that if we should advise a Christian now a-days to do nothing else in order to his salvation, but to resign his will to that of God, he would think we design'd to make him an Heretick; and would cleave more firmly to the Ordinances of the Church than to those of God.

I ask'd her, *Whether she was a Catholick, and whether one could be sav'd out of the holy Church?*

*She said,* Yes, Sir, I am a Catholick, and ready to die for the Faith and Doctrine of Jesus Christ; because 'tis necessary for me. If I had remain'd in innocence,

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(d) 2 *Thef.* 2. 10, 11, 12.



without having contracted so many evil habits by the conversation of men, (e) I should not have needed the Law of God, nor the Precepts of Jesus Christ; but having departed from that innocence in which I ought to have resign'd my self wholly to God, yielding up to him the free will that he gave me, I have need now of this Law, and those Evangelical Counsels, as means to recover that innocence; and that I may with singleness of heart resign my will to that of God; as all other men also have need of them; for every one has departed from that innocence, and contracted many evil habits, which hinder this resignation to God. I embrace indeed the Apostolical Faith and Belief; but I do not believe many things which those who call themselves the Christian Church lay before us; because they are not true; for he who should believe to be sav'd by going to Church, and frequenting the Sacraments, or such like things, would at death find himself deceiv'd, because no Prayers or Sacraments operate without (f) an inward disposition: And whereas we see people frequent the Churches and Sacraments without piety or devotion, we may well judge that the world is deceived by such like things, while they place the hopes of their salvation on outward things, which are but the signification of the inward disposition of the mind (g). You will say, It may be, Sir, that the Church supposes this inward disposition; which is a false supposition; because we see evidently by experience, that the inward disposition is very far from what appears outwardly: and upon this supposition the Church could not appoint the baptising of new born Infants, who are not at all capable of inward dispositions. I doubt not but these Romanists would bring many Reasons and Arguments; but I hold to the Truth of God, and know no other Church but the souls which possess the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, Lo (h) this is the only true Church out of which there can be no salvation (i); for every one has need of taking up these means, that by them he may attain to a RESIGNATION to God.

*The Church*

(e) Mat. 9. 12. (f) Job. 4. 24 (g) 1 Pet. 3. 21. (h) Job. 8. 31. (i) John 2. 2,

I said to her, *That truly there must be some infatuation of Spirit that tied us to this Church; for tho we see she does not at all possess the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, yet we are afraid to leave her, as if she were the holy Church; tho the truth makes it evidently appear that she is not.*

*She said, Sir, I bless God that he opens your Eyes to discover the truth in what concerns your salvation; for as long as you do not discover evil, you cannot avoid it, but will still be in danger of being deceived by it. If the Devil were not in this Church, it is impossible that so many good spirits should thus blindly follow her. 'Tis certainly by an infatuation of the understanding; for they see enough in the outside to judg assuredly that she is not guided by the holy spirit, and that she follows not in any respect the Doctrine of Jesus Christ; and nevertheleis they continue so wedded to her thro' som panick or pusillanimous Fear, that they dare not shake off her dependance, fearing they should do evil in following the truth: And if any person of a sound Judgment discovers her deceits, and uncharms his Understanding, so as to perceive her Errors, yet out of respect to the Glory of the World he dare not forsake her, because this Church is advanc'd to so great Honour and Authority, that no body dares leave her, for fear of being disgrac'd or persecuted by her, as she would certainly do so long as it is in her power. For this cause Jesus Christ, speaking of the last Times, in which we are fallen, says, (k) That a man must get out of Judea, and flee, even without returning to his house to take his Cloaths. Judea is the Church and the Sanctuary, where the abomination of desolation is now so increas'd that it is at its heighth. A man needs not glory in being a Son of the Church: for the Children shall be cast out of the Kingdom of Heaven (l); and the Jews and (m) Heathens shall be admitted into it; for God can make of these stones Children of Abraham (n). Lay aside therefore, Sir, all these Fears and Pusillanimities; they proceed from a softness of spirit. Keep close to the Truth, and follow her without Fear; for she will guide you to salvation. If Glory or Interest do not hold you in a de-*

(k) *Mark* 13. 14, 15, 16. (l) *Mat* 8. 12. (m) *Rom.* 11. 26, 31. (n) *Mat.* 3. 9.

pendance on the Church, leave her boldly; for her Reign will be very shortly at an end, and she will perish with all her Glory and Possessions. 'Tis better lose our Garments than our Life, or even our Wealth and Honour, than our souls.

## The Fifth Conference.

### Of the Destruction of Christendom.

I said to her, *That I was not so afraid as she thought, and that I had ask'd many things of her, of which I made no doubt: but I desir'd always to be further cleared, and therefore propos'd many questions; Yet on the contrary I had long suspected that the Church was the Whore in the Revelations(o); in which her behaviour had confirm'd me; therefore would flee out of her Dependance.*

*She said, 'T will be your best course; for her time draws near, in which she (p) shall be raz'd and rooted out, and her Children scatter'd and divided. All the World shall bewail her, and call her miserable; for her misery shall be great, and all her Villanies shall be discover'd. It would be then too late to forsake her: for all those who shall be found drinking out of her Cup shall perish with her. Therefore Jesus Christ has said, That we must not wait (r) till the winter, or the Sabbath-day; That is, till the time of persecution, and the Day of the coming of Jesus Christ in his glory: for in her persecution there will be so great evils, that the like (s) were never seen; (t) Men shall pine away for Terror and Fear, and be very incapable of studying how to find the Truth; Therefore you must not wait till the time of extremity, but flee and get out of her before. Neither must you wait till the Day when our Saviour shall come in his*

(o) Rev. 18. 4. (p) Rev. 17. 16. 18. 2. (r) Mat. 24. 26.  
(s) Mat. 24. 21. (t) Luke 21. 26.

Conf. V. Of the Destruction of Christendom. 25

Glory, because he (u) will render to every one according to his works; the time of penitence shall be past: it must be done presently, or else we shall all perish, For the Lord (x) will overthrow all evil by the brightness of his coming, which is to be looked for only in order to receive our last Judgment, for which it is more than time to prepare our selves, and to flee to the Mountains, taking heed of men, who have for so long deceived and abused us, to the prejudice of the salvation of our souls. We must no longer trust in any body; for all have left and forsaken their God: tho some remain still in the Faith, nevertheless they are not in the works of Faith; for the Jews with Faith have not the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, which is the work of Faith; and the Christians have no more Faith, and shall not recover it, since Jesus Christ says, (y) That at his coming he shall not find Faith in Israel. They are of the House of Israel, and the people of God, who nevertheless have denied his Faith, and given it to men only.

I ask'd her, To what place I ought to flee, since the whole world was judged, and the Plagues would be universal? That I might put my self in greater danger in the place to which I should flee, than in that which I had left.

She said, Flee first out of the Dominions of Rome, Sir; for that place will be first of all destroyed; God ordering all his affairs with Judgment\*, Weight (z), and Measure. He will visit first of all those who have most offended him. Justice regulates all things; and because Christians have more treacherously offended him than any others, they have drawn on themselves the first Vengeance. All others will follow the order (a) of their iniquities; as they grow worse in wickedness, accordingly they shall be nearer their punishment. It is fit always to retire into places where the abomination is less; There the Chastisements will be less; tho (b) indeed no place shall be exempted from Plagues, because all parts of the world have deserv'd them; Nevertheless they shall be inflicted only according (c) as every one has merited, and

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(u) Mat. 16. 27. (x) Ps. 72. & Ps. 75. (y) Luk. 18. 8. (\*) Ps. 117. 37. (z) Wisd. 11. 21. (a) Rom. 2. 9. (b) Is. 24. 1-6-17, 18, 19. Hab. 3. 5-18 (c) Rev. 18. 6.



deserved them, and no further ; for sins beget (d) miseries, and they proceed not from God, as they would make us believe; because no Evils come from God, who alone is the Author of all good : So that all the *good* that we see and feel, comes always from God; and all the *evil* that we see and feel, comes always from sin ; and as the *goodness* of God continually brings forth *good things*, so the malignity of sin continually brings forth *evil things*; and (e) as sins increase, evils increase the more. Hence it comes that the Plagues are universal, because the sins are so ; for as long as there were places where God was yet honour'd on Earth, he bore with others, waiting for their Repentance ; and the universal Plagues shall not fall out so long as there are any who have not deserv'd them ; For God is too just to afflict (f) a righteous person, or to chastise one that is innocent. That is but the manner of unrighteous men ; but God always exercises Righteousness both as to the *good* and to the *evil*. However men imagine that God sends his Plagues, they are deceived ; for nothing but sin can bring them on, and produce them. According as men Offend, their Evils increase.

*I said to her ; that these were most excellent Truths, that no evil could come from God, and that nevertheless nobody did comprehend this.*

*She said, Sir, the reason is, Men do not know the Righteousness, the Goodness, and the Truth of God ; but they judge blindly of all they see, according to their Passions. If they knew the righteousness of God, they could never think of praying that God would keep off his last Plagues ; (g) for they would see that they will never fall out but when sin shall be universal, because God is perfectly Righteous ; but because we do not conceive this Righteousness, we believe that there are yet many good men in the world, because they seem so to us. In this we give a tacite Re-proof to God ; for if our belief were true, that there were yet at present so many good men in the World as we are persuaded there are, God would*

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(d) Jer. 2. 19. (e) Rev. 18. 4, 5. (f) Gen. 18. 23, 25.  
(g) John 17. 9.

Conf. IV. Of the Destruction of Christendom. 27

be unjust to send on us so many different miseries as we feel at present. If he would have forgiven them in *Abraham's* time provided (b) he could have shewn him but ten righteous Persons, yea, even fewer, how could he chastise the VWorld now, if there were so great a number in it as we believe there are? Is he not the same God still? And has he not the same goodness since he cannot change? Truly Sir, men mistake God in every thing; and through this mistake, they utter reproaches against him, and blaspheme against his Righteousness, goodness, and Truth; particularly Christians, who with their seeming Piety lay the blame on God of all their mis-deeds. Is not this horrible darkness, since they choose rather to charge God with their Faults, than discover them by the Truth, that they might repent of them? Truly Sir, the power of Darkness is great, that it can so obscure all the Men of the VWorld, that no body knows the Truth any longer, and even the most part shut their Eyes that they may not discover it, and in so doing they think they do well. The *Egyptian* Darkness was far less dangerous, for it was felt, and they durst not stir, (k) out of the place. for fear of falling; but those Christians now do not perceive their Darkness, or their Errours; on the contrary (l) they think they are in the Light, and condemn others who see more clearly than themselves. By what means should the Children of the Kingdom be saved, when they take lying for Truth, which they reject as an evil thing.

*I said to her, that nevertheless truth was a very lovely thing; and as for my self, I would follow it as far as I could discover it.*

*She said,* You will discover it sufficiently, if you love it; for the holy Spirit, who is now born into the World, will discover it to all those who shall search for it; but there are few among the Christians who would receive it, tho' it offer it self first of all to their Eyes, because they are so full of Errors and Superstitions, that they will not make way for

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(b) *Gen.* 18. 30. (i) *Jam.* 1. 17. (k) *Exod.* 10. 23.  
(l) *Rev.* 3. 17. and 18. 7.

this truth which is lovely. They live in a presumption of their Salvation, yea, they condemn all the World to Damnation, because it does not follow their Laws, though in the mean time they be but humane, and no ways divine Laws. And whereas God says, (m) that he resists the proud, and gives Grace to the humble; he who is Truth (n) will resist them, even as they resist the Truth, which is God. But, if for your part, Sir, you do it, and will follow it, you shall obtain the happiness of reigning with Jesus Christ in Glory. But without Faith you cannot be saved; for if you do not believe that the World is Judged, you are not in the light of Truth; because the deportment of Men is a certain Evidence of it, since we see them without Repentance and Amendment; and if you do not believe that we live now in the Reign of Antichrist, you will assuredly be deceived; For under the covert of Holiness *he will deceive the Elect,* (o) if it were possible; and if you do not believe that Jesus Christ shall come to reign on the Earth with Men, (p) to render Justice to every one, and to root out all Evil, and recompence (q) the sufferings of the Righteous; without this persuasion you can never support the Evils which hang over our Head; for without knowing these Truths, it will be impossible not to fall into despair or murmuring against God, if we know not his Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth, with which he does all things. Thus we cannot be saved (r) without Faith, which discovers the Truth. All these things are true of Judgment, of Antichrist, and of the coming of Jesus Christ in Glory; but if you will not believe them, you resist the known Truth, which is a Sin against the Holy-Ghost, that shall never be forgiven.

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(m) 1 Pet. 5. 5. (n) Joh. 14. 6. (o) Math. 24. 24. (p) Ps. 96. 13. Hab. 3. Rev. 5. 10. 11. 17, 18. 20. 4. &c. (q) *ibid.* 2 Tim. 2. 12. (r) Heb. 10. 37, 38.

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## The Sixth Conference.

*Discovers the Signs that the World is Judged,  
and that ANTICHRIST Reigns now.*

I said to her, *I would be very careful not to commit any Sin against the Holy Ghost, though I know not yet the Truth in every thing, entreating she would afford the means to discover the Truth of all the things she told me, to wit, the Judgment, the Reign of Antichrist, and the coming of Jesus Christ in Glory.*

*She said, You would infallibly believe them, if you would seriously remark what you may see with your Eyes, and conceive with your Humane Understanding; for these things are so far advanced, that one may feel them, provided his Mind be not infatuated. For first, as to the Judgment, as I have already told you, it is easy to see that the world is Judged, because sins are universal, and no body will Repent. There is every where (s) the Lust of the Eyes, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Pride of Life; of which no body Repents and Amends; and there can be no forgiveness, where there is no amendment; and therefore of necessity the World is Judged, because these evils are not among some particular persons, as they have been in all times; but they are generally among all men, both small and great: If you observe them narrowly, you will find, Sir, that these three sins reign infallibly in the Hearts of all men, of whatsoever condition; those in whom you cannot discover them, are very often the greatest Hypocrites, who know better to dissemble and cover their sins. And for the second, The believing that we are now in the Reign of Antichrist, you need only Remark narrowly by what*

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(s) 1 John 2. 16.



Spirit Men are led, because they who are led by God, follow his Righteousness, (r) his Goodness and his Truth:

On the contrary, they who are led by the Devil, oppose themselves to this; and if you Reflect upon the Actions of Men now, you will find nothing in them but *Injustice, Malice and Lying*, which are three qualities of the Devil, opposed to the *Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth of God*: This is so common at present, that there is nothing to be seen but Injustice, Malice, and affected Lies.

I said to her, in my opinion there were some men who seemed to follow Righteousness and Truth; tho it must be acknowledged the greatest part live in Injustice and Deceit.

She said, Sir, Judge (s) righteously, and examin every thing to the bottom. You grant already that the greatest part of men now live in Injustice and lies. All the World finds this by experience: And when the greatest part is for the Devil, we may well fear that he will shortly have the whole; for as rotten Apples spoil the sound ones, (x) so Men corrupted by the Devil, are still corrupting and drawing in those who are yet sound. If all men in general, or almost all, were on the Devils side, the Reign of Antichrist would be at an end, for he could gain no more; he would be pleased to have all his Adherents with him to Hell; for the reason why he keeps them in Life here, and raises them to places and preferments, is, that they may serve him in corrupting others, and in doing all the mischief to the good that may be. Now there would be no need of this, if all in general were dedicated to his service; he could go no farther; and God would not continue the World in being to wait for men's Conversion; for those who are Dedicated to the Devil, will not be converted, as some other sinners would be who have not yet renounc'd God, nor given their Souls to the Devil, as his sworn Votaries or Sorcerers do, who are precisely dedicated to the Devil of their own free will; as the greatest part of men have done. This may appear sufficiently by their Malice, which is not only human, but Devilish also; for human Malice

(r) Eph. 4. 9. (s) John 7. 24. (x) 1 Cor. 15. 33.

extends it self no farther than to that which is pleasant or profitable to the Malicious Person ; but at present we see men's Malice so black, that he who acts it, has neither pleasure nor profit by it ; and nevertheless they afflict the good, and ruin sometimes the wealth and honour of their Neighbour, without any profit to themselves : And lies are so common, tho frequently without any advantage, that the truth is seldom or never spoken, from whence it appears, that it certainly comes from the Devil, for men could not arrive at such a malice as that is, which we see now reign in the World.

If I told you, Sir, that I had these truths by any particular Revelation from God, you would entertain, it may be, some scrupulous doubts about it ; but I refer you to your own experience, that you may know by human Reasons, that we are fallen into the last times, that the Judgment is past on the whole World ; And that this is now the Reign of Antichrist. For *as to the coming of Jesus Christ in Glory*, I cannot make it appear to you so precisely, as the things that are already come to pass ; but if you read attentively the Holy Scriptures, they will plainly enough declare it to you ; for of all contain'd in them, there is (y) nothing more spoken of, than of the coming of Jesus Christ on Earth in Glory : (z) From the beginning of the World we are told, that Jesus Christ was to become man to Reign with men on Earth ; and tho he had not been man to suffer, he had become man to Reign : Because he would take and give to men a perfect contentment of (a) Conversing together with them in Body and Soul, Divinity and Humanity. I cannot make you see this, Sir, by the Eyes of the Body, because the time is not yet come : Therefore I send you to the Holy Scriptures. But as for the Judgment and the Reign of Antichrist, you may see it with your Eyes, and comprehend it with your Natural understanding : For it is visible and comprehensible by him whose Spirit is not infatuated, and who seeks to discover the Truth. The thing is so manifest, that it speaks out it

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(y) See Ps. 50. 72 75 96 97 98. Isa. 40. &c. (z) Ps. 40. 8, Heb. 10. 5, 7. (a) 2 Cor. 6. 16. Rev. 21.

self: Many say blindly, *We are in the end of the VWorld,* and they perceive not that they speak truth: Others say, *The Devil reigns over all;* and they see not that this is the Reign of Antichrist, who Rules as Universal Emperour of the whole world: They Judg by the effects, without searching into the cause. The Devil hinders this, for he well knows that if the cause were discovered, many would be Converted; therefore he darkens their minds, that they may never come to the Knowledg of the Truth, because it would confound him.

*\* I said to her, I perceived clearly enough that the world was Judged, because sin abounds in it, and no body will be Converted: But that we were in the Reign of Antichrist, I did not perceive so clearly, for we have always been taught, that he shall be a Visible and corporal man.*

*\* She said, Sir, it is well that you see the World is Judged. You shall perceive the rest sufficiently, for the Reign of Antichrist is yet more manifest. Antichrist, that is to say, against Christ. He whose understanding is not dark ned may easily see, if men follow Christ, or if they go in a way contrary to what he walked in while he was on Earth: And you see that Christians nowadays live a quite other Life than what Jesus Christ led, and they not only do not follow him at a distance, but are directly opposite to him; for there Pride Reigns, instead of Humility; and Avarice, instead of Poverty; and instead of Charity, there is nothing but Envy; and so of all the other things which Christ Jesus Taught us; They act wholly in opposition to him, and they do not consider that all that is contrary to Christ, is Assuredly Antichrist. The time is come wherein men would fain have a God and Devil Visible to their Eyes, that might go before them. This is great and thick darkness; because neither God, nor the Devil are visible; For (b) they are Spirits, who cannot be known but by their Operations, when they are good or evil, according to the Spirit that Animates them. Hereby we shall know by what Spirit the World is animated at present; For the Spirit of God is always Just, Good and True; (c) and that of the Devil is always evil, without Righte-*

(b) Job. 4. 24. Eph. 6. 12. (c) Eph. 5. 9.



ousness, and without Truth. By these real Signs, we may certainly discern if Christ rules the World, or Antichrist: We need not go to consult Oracles to make this Discovery; for all Men of good judgment, may make a sufficient trial, and see it with their Eyes, and feel it with their Hands, by taking the Marks which discover the solid truth: For if they will needs make this discovery by the signs of apparent Vertues, they will remain in their Darknes; because the Devil has so disguised and coloured his wickedness with outward Devotions and Piety, that he thereby deceives all the World. We must come to the Essence of Vertue, to see if it be God or the Devil, who animates these outward Devotions; for if they be of God, they will always be accompanied with Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth. But we see but too much the contrary; for the most part of those Devout Persons at present, are without Righteousness or Equity: There was never seen so much going to Church, receiving the Sacraments, and so little Fidelity; so many *Pater nosters*, and so little Truth; so many good Words, and so little true Charity. Do you not see, Sir, that all order of Justice is renvers'd, and that there is more regard of doing Justly before Men, than before God? And yet these are the best now, who do justly before Men; for the most part deceive and deal unfaithfully, as well before Men as before God: For Iniquity is become so common, that now almost they are not ashamed to commit it publickly. If a man go to Church, (d) and frequent the Sacraments, he passes for a good Man, though he be no ways just. If we consider well all the Qualities of the Devil, we shall see them all practis'd in the behaviour of Men now; he is a Liar, an Hypocrite and Unconstant, a Deceiver and Unfaithful, abounds in all kind of Malice, Proud, Arrogant, Envious, Contentious, without Faith or Honesty, Obstinate in Malice, and in a desperate Rage: These Qualities are but too much practis'd by the most part of Christians; and yet we perceive not that this is now the Reign of Antichrist! Men must be extremely blinded, that they do not see this more clear than

(d) Jer. 8. 12. (e) 2 Tim. 3. 9.



the Day; because the evil is too manifest. But many Minds are so infatuated, that they cannot believe what they perceive so manifestly by their Understandings, but they wait to believe this Antichrist, till they shall see him in a Humane Form: Which is a very small matter, in respect of his Doctrine; for that Body can never cause Damnation to our Souls; as his Doctrine will do, which being contrary to Christ, leads us to Perdition. Since Jesus Christ (g) is the way, we can never attain to Salvation but by him; contrary ways lead to Damnation; it matters little whether we are led into them by a Body, or by a Spirit; since we are undone as to Salvation.

I asked her, *If we ought not to believe, that this Antichrist will be sometime corporeally visible in a Humane Form?*

*She said,* Yes, Sir, I believe this will be toward the end of his Reign; for he has set himself to counterfeit all the Actions of Jesus Christ, and to ape what he sees he has done. And perceiving that Christ became a Natural Man, he also will move his Sorcerers to produce Men by the operation of the Devil; which is done many times, for there are certainly many of these Antichrists born already in the World, who make great Havock in the Church, and have in their Train those who are most in Authority; and as the Apostles of Jesus Christ laboured to introduce Truth into the World, these incarnate Devils labour to introduce Lies into it, and to sow Tares, as they did good Grain. I doubt not also, but they have a Head of their Iniquity, who will appear openly when his (h) wickedness shall be discover'd, and when he cannot deceive any longer under the Cloak of Holiness, he will deceive then by pure Wickedness, and will exercise cruelty towards all those who will not be his Followers. That time, Sir, will not be so dangerous as the present is, because he shall be known for the Devil, and now they follow him as if he were God. Therefore he keeps himself so long concealed, and does not appear bodily; for he could not do so much prejudice to Souls, if he were known. He has spread Darkness through all the World, that no body may dis-

cover him, exercising all his wickedness **UNDER PRETEXT OF GOOD THINGS, OR OF NATURAL OR CASUAL THINGS**, that no body may believe that all the evils which we see, do come from this Antichrist, and that no body may be on his guard, because he does not appear yet in human Flesh: This blinds all the World; for tho they see all the qualities of the Devil rule in men, yet they will nor believe these so solid marks, as they would do if they saw him bodily, which bodily appearance is not real: For the Devil is pure Spirit, and has not the Power of forming to himself a Body, unless it be a fantastical one, or else by the Seed of some Sorcerer, which is abominable. *note*

I said to her, *It was not to be doubted that we live certainly in the time when Antichrist Reigns by his Doctrine and his Operations; because Men (in the general) have all, or the greatest part of them, the qualities of the Devil.*

*She said, Sir, there is no reckoning to be made of any other thing, but what concerns the Salvation of Souls; for if the Devil be followed in his Doctrine and in his Works, he needs no more to make himself Master of our Souls: He'll do no more hurt to men by his Body than he does by his Spirit; and if it were not to Ape God, he would never take a Natural Body; for he knows well enough, how to make a body of Air, or some other matter, to deceive Sorcerers, whose imagination he so blinds, that they believe they see and feel some real body, tho it be only Phantastical. By this he prevails with them to commit all sorts of Evil, pretending to dwell with them, that he may still prophane the works which God has introduc'd for an Holy end. So that the Natural Body of the Devil is not so much to hurt men, as to bring Glory to the Devil, when he shall be discovered; and shall be corporally Honour'd and follow'd by all his Adherents, as Jesus Christ was by his Disciples: And that he may leave none of the works of Jesus Christ unimitated, that he may pervert them; he must also take a body of Flesh, that he may likewise Reign Bodily, thereby to consummate his wretched Kingdom, which began as soon as God became man, (i) and has still encreast, even till this pre-* *note*

(i) 2 Thes. 2. 7,

lent time, without being known, or revealed: And since God has the goodnels to Reveal him at present, he should be discovered, if it were possible, to all the world, that he may no longer deceive any body under the mask of Vertue; and that those who will needs follow him, may know what they do. For the Body of Jesus Christ went not thro' all the world in order to the forming of his Church, but he has herein only introduc'd his Doctrine, which sanctifies *(b)* the Souls of thole that follow it, tho they have never seen his body; tis the same as to the Doctrine of the Devil, which corrupts Souls, tho they should never see his Body: They are as Diabolical in following the works of the Devil, as others are holy in imitating the actions of Jesus Christ, whose Body they never saw.

I said to her, *It was a great Loss that these Truths could not be publish'd to all the world; for all are ignorant of them, and believe there is no Antichrist until he appear in his humane Body.*

*She said, Sir, 'tis lamentable that these things, so prejudicial to so many Souls, must be conceal'd; and that the Marvels of God, which are so important, cannot be discover'd. The last Times are come (c): Antichrist Reigns over all (d): And Jesus Christ (e) will come quickly to Reign here in glory: The forerunning plagues (f) of Judgment are begun; and no body will believe any thing of all this, because we cannot speak of them openly. You are the first, Sir, to whom I have declared these secrets: Make a good use of them. I shall reckon it a gain, tho none but your Soul alone should receive the Light of them. The world is deceived, and will be, while they do not open their Eyes to the Truths I have told you: They are nevertheless from God, and cannot fail; if all the world will needs ruin themselves, Sir, save your self: For tho none of these things should fall out in your Life-time, and you should not see the utmost extremities of the Plagues, nor the Body of Antichrist, nor yet the coming of Jesus Christ in Glory, yet it will be most expedient for you that you believe all these things, which will open your eyes to discover your particular faults, and the dangers in which you live, and will give you prudence*

*(b) Joh. 17. 17. (c) 1 Cor. 10. 11. (d) Rev. 13. (e) Rev. 16. 15. (f) Math. 24. 8.*



to avoid the deceits in which we live at present. Make use of the occasion, Sir, without contending out of curiosity about words, and the times of every thing: because the Judgment still falls out (g) when we die; and it (h) will never be recalled. Tho even there were not a general Judgment; yet there is always our particular Judgment, which precisely respects us; and if all the People of the world perish by the Deluge, excepting eight persons, it was thro' their unbelief; for (i) if they had believed the words of Noah, they would have been sav'd in his Ark: Even to now those shall Perish who will not believe the Truths that I tell you from God. They shall certainly Perish in the Ship-wreck, because they will not save themselves in time, it will be in vain for them to ascend into their Houses of Honour and Glory, that they might avoid the Plagues which will follow them every where.

I said to her, *That I could not doubt any longer of the things she told me, because of the Operation of her words in my Soul, which could not but come from God: But I wish'd earnestly that many might enjoy the same effects.*

*She said, Sir, Your desire will be fulfilled: for many will receive this Light, tho very few among the Christians; because they are so obstinately wedded to a presumption of their Salvation, being falsely perswaded that they shall be Saved by their frivolous Devotions. These will resist the Truth, and believe they are Holy, and Perfect, till they shall see themselves swallowed up of the Plagues; and when it shall be too late (k) they will cry for Mercy, without any hope of succour, no more than in the days of Noah, for it is not written that he took so much as one into the Ark after the Deluge was begun: Those who had not formerly gone in to it did all perish, even as those shall do who will not now believe that we live in the days of Antichrist. They must of necessity be deceived by him, and Perish. What remedy can there be for their evils, since they seek not to be healed, because they are insensible of them, as they would be of a Leprosie? We must flee from them that we may not contract such a dangerous malady as*

(g) Heb. 9. 27. (h) Eccl. 1. 1. 3. (i) Heb. 1. 1. 7. (k) Prov. 1. 28.



this blindness. because they shall be destroyed (l) before they know it. *It shall be with them, (m) says Jesus Christ, as it was in the days of Noah; They Ate, they Drank, they Married, without any apprehension: Even so tho they see and feel the beginnings (n) of sorrows by Wars, they do not apprehend them to be the last Plagues; they endeavour to escape and avoid them by Human means, going from one place to another, without remembering what Christ says, (o) That two shall be grinding at one Mill, the one shall be taken, the other left, or even two in the same bed: To shew that it avails nothing for one to save his Body; but he must endeavour to be united unto God; or otherwise, he shall be taken in what place soever he go to.*

*I said to her, That I would follow her even to Death, because she had the words of truth, tho all the world should withstand it.*

*She said; Sir, There is no need that you follow my Person, but my words; keep them in your Heart, and thereby you will attain to Salvation; for they are saving. Never turn away from them: For the Devil has this invention, to raise a great many distractions that he may divert us from following the Truth; he sends sickness, Troubles, Affairs of Importance, and a thousand other occasions, to divert our good purposes, that we may never bring them to effect. If you were speaking, Sir, with all good men who are in publick Offices, whether Civil or Ecclesiastick, they would acknowledge to you that they were never so throng'd with Affairs or Business as now; because the Devil being unable to gain them entirely to himself, he endeavours, at least, to give them so much business, as that they may not have leisure to think of their Salvation, nor of the Dangers in which they live: We must certainly discover his wiles, or otherwise he will draw us along with him insensibly. He has deceived so many by these means, making them believe that their employments were profitable for the Publick, or their Neighbours, when they serv'd for nothing but human accommodations, without any advan-*

(l) 1 Thes. 5. 3. (m) Luk. 17. 26. (n) Mat. 24. 8.  
(o) Luk. 17. 34, 35.

tage to the Glory of God, or the Salvation of Souls : And under this False Perswasion many have lost their own Salvation, without procuring that of others. It is not in these last times, Sir, that Places, Offices, or Employments are saving ; it is much for a Man to save his own Soul ; for the times are too dangerous, and the world too blind and obstinate. If they perceived their blindness, they would seek to find a remedy : But while they believe they see clearly, they cannot think of a remedy, and they fall easily into eternal ruin : But if you, Sir, for your own part, would be saved, remember the Truth, and follow it, for without it there can be no Salvation : For it alone makes us to know God, and the Devil, and likewise the state of the World, and that of our own Conscience ; Truth shews us also the certain way of Salvation ; and by it all the wonders of God are discovered. It is the Light of the World, and the sure harbour of Salvation, without which nothing can be good or beautiful.

### The seventh Conference.

*Shews that Jesus Christ will come in Glory, or else he should not be the Saviour of the World, as he is ; and there would be no just Recompence for the Good, and for the Wicked.*

I said to her, that I had sufficiently discovered the truth of this, that we are in the last times, that the World is judged, and Antichrist reigns, and also that the Plagues are begun, because there is no truth nor Righteousness among Men ; but that I did not yet see why Jesus Christ shall come to reign in Glory upon Earth.

She said, This is the most evident truth, and the greatest Goodness and Justice of God, because Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the World, (p) and the restorer (q) of all things. You see clearly by all the Truths that I have told you, that very few will be saved of all those who live at present after the usual manner; and if this miserable World should last yet longer, there (x) would still be fewer, because every day it grows worse. How therefore should Jesus Christ be the Saviour of the World, if he did not restore all things? No body could be saved; for the whole World perishes. There must come a time (r) that the whole World shall be saved, that he may be fitly called the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD. And this cannot be in Heaven as People imagine, because all who enter there shall be saved, having received Salvation at the hour of Death; and this respects only particular persons, who by reason of their small number cannot well be called the WORLD, because it consists in a Generality, and not in some particular Persons. 'Tis a truth therefore that in a certain time (s) Jesus Christ will save all the World in general: This will be at his coming in Glory, when (u) he shall have judged the World and condemned the Wicked, he will save the Good with all (v) their Posterity, who can never perish any more, because of the continual Presence of Jesus Christ, God and Man, who (y) will govern and lead them to Salvation. This his coming in Glory is also necessary (z) to restore all things, because there has been no reparation yet of all the Injuries and Affronts that were done to his Humanity: His low Condition has not been raised up; his Poverty has not been enriched; his Tears have not been wiped away; his Humility has not been exalted; neither have any other of his Contempts

(p) 1 Joh. 4. 14. (q) Ps. 75. 3, 4. Act. 3. 21. (r) Matthe. 24. 22. (s) Is. 4. 3. 45. 22. Luk. 3. 6. (t) Ps. 98. 2, 3. (u) Ps. 98. 9. 96, 97. &c. (x) Is. 60. 21, 22 (y) Is. 40. 11. Ezek. 34. 12. &c. (z) Matthe. 19. 28, 29. Rev. 11. 17, 18.



and sufferings been repaired, nor of those who have loved and followed him : One has died as a Malefactor, another as a Seducer, a *St. Andrew* on the Cross, a *St. Lawrence* on the Grid-iron, and so many other holy Martyrs who have suffered Persecution and Death for Righteousness and Truth. There has been no reparation of all this hitherto, but by imaginary things, as they say, that Jesus Christ was exalted on the Cross, which is an infamous reparation, to dye on a Gibbet as a Malefactor. If those who hold this Cross to be a reparation of Honour, were hanged after this manner themselves, they would not believe that their Honour were repaired by this : How can they imagine that that of God was so : It is not to be imagin'd that Honour should be repaired by Infamy it self. But because his coming in Glory was unknown to them, they have applied Infamy to Glory, that they might say something of it. The truth is, Jesus Christ will come upon the Earth to (a) repair all things; for it would not be just that he should have suffered so innocently, and after him so many other Saints and Martyrs, who were free from Crimes, and that they should continue dead, without being repaired Spiritually and bodily for what they have suffered unjustly, or for the Love of God ; and if People imagine that all these things must be repair'd in a Divine and imaginary Heaven ; they are deceived, because this reparation cannot be perfectly made there ; for natural sufferings ought also to have suitable reparations, unless God did as Charmers do, who cure bodily wounds with spiritual remedies, or some artificial words. No, Sir, this will not go after that manner ; because God does his works always in a perfection, every way accomplish'd. (b) He will repair both bodily and spiritually all that has been done unjustly ; and the whole world shall thereby discover his Righteousness, Goodness and Truth, that every one may know that he is worthy, and just ; worthy of all honour ; which then all the world will render to him (c) ; and just, to render compleat Justice to every

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(a) *Rev.* 20. (b) *Dent.* 32. 4. (c) *Is.* 45. 23, 24  
one



one (d). There are so many innocent persons afflicted, and Saints unknown and despised; on the other hand there are so many wicked men honour'd, rais'd to places and Honours, and even held for Saints. All these being Dead, and the Truth, as to them, undiscover'd, must not God avenge the quarrel of the Good, and make appear the wickedness of the wicked, that he may be Just, Good, and True?

I said to her, *That every one look'd for these Reparations in the day of the general Judgment, which must be done in a little time, or suddenly, where every one shall be recompenc'd in Heaven according to his Merits or Sufferings.*

She said, Sir, They will make God a God of Confusion; What appearance is there that this Judgment can pass in a day, or suddenly, since the whole world must appear there? It should be necessary that all the men in the world, should, after the manner of an Enchantment, be Transported to the same place in an instant; who could hear in that croud the Justification of the Righteous? If it were to be done only by word, they would not hear one by reason of another; and if every one in particular must be spoke to, to declare his good or evil Deeds, it would need a long time before all were repur'd: Years would not suffice to Judge so many man as have been upon the Earth. Truly Sir, all the speculations of men are nothing, in respect of the Truth, but Chimera's in the Air. God took six days (e) to Create the World deliberately and in order, as he has done all his works by weight (f) and measure, without any disorder or confusion. He made *Noah* prepare an hundred years before the (g) Deluge; and when it came, it began to Rain, which Rain lasted (h) forty days. The Plagues are now begun, and will follow in order even to their end, and the Judgment will also go on in order, so deliberately, that there shall not be the least confusion in it; for that can come only from men, and not from God, who does all in Order.

Neither is there any imaginary Heaven, as people fancy it, where every one shall be Rewarded or Restor-

(d) Rev. 11. 18. (e) Gen. 1. (f) Wisd. 11. 21.  
(g) Gen. 6. 3, 13, 14. (h) Gen. 7. 14.

Conf.VII. *The Glorious Coming of Christ.* 43

ed; for Heaven is no other but the presence of God, who contains all things, and can't be contain'd by any, because he is greater than all things. We are in Heaven when (i) we are resign'd to him, whether we live or die, we are still in Heaven when we are in God: Now being thus Divinely in God, we do not, notwithstanding, receive the material and bodily reparation of the sufferings which we have materially and bodily endur'd: And as God has given us both a Body and Soul, he has also given us a Paradise both of Body and Soul: For this cause God would have become Man, even tho man had never sin'd; for God makes all his works perfect and compleat: The Soul can indeed have its compleat Paradise by the Presence of God, because it is a Spirit like to him; but the Body can have no Paradise but a Material and Bodily one like it self; because it is of a Material Nature, it cannot have a perfect happiness by a Spirit, or Divinity. Lo, this is the reason why Man, that he may be happy, must of necessity have his Paradise in the world, which was Created by God for no other end (k) but to serve for a Paradise to Man, whom he was pleas'd to Create of a Bodily and Spiritual Nature, both together; and he has also prepar'd for him, both a Bodily and Spiritual Blessedness, which are, the Presence of God as to the Spiritual; and for the Corporeal, the Earth, and the World, and all that therein is: By which you may see, Sir, the truth of the coming of Jesus Christ upon Earth, to Reign with Men, that their eternal Blessedness may be compleated, and that every one may have a Reparation, by fulfilling all Righteousness; not in a speculative or imaginary way, or of a short continuance; but a Real, Divine and Corporeal Reparation, (l) which will last for ever: For God's Recompences are not Temporal and Finite, but Eternal, as coming from an Eternal God, who can't give finite or imperfect gifts. Consider, Sir, all these Truths, and you will perceive sensibly, why Christ must come to Reign upon Earth; and that he has not taken an human Body to Reign in the Empyrean Heaven which is

(i) *Psal.* 73. 25. (k) *Isa.* (45. 28. (l) *Isa.* 65. and 66. *Rev.* 13. 14.---17.

*note* Divine, but only to Reign on Earth ; for this Divinity has no need of any Body ; but this body has need of, and must of necessity have some material place to contain it, such as the Earth is. And if to repair an injury done to any, it be needful to make the reparation in the same place, and before the same persons where the injury was done ; why should not God repair upon Earth the injuries received there ? On Earth they shall be <sup>(m)</sup> repaired, as on Earth they have been committed.

<sup>(m)</sup> *Psal.* 37. 9, 11.

### The Eighth Conference.

*Shows that M. Anthoinette Bourignon is sent from God to declare the Truth to Men.*

*I* said to her, that I was now convinc'd of all ; that I must confess before all the world, that she possess the Holy Spirit ; for a humane Spirit could never give so clear an understanding of all the marvels of God.

*note* She Said, Sir, you are not deceived in believing that I possess the Holy Spirit, because he lives in me and teaches me all that I have told you ; for I have never learn'd any thing from any man, neither would I learn of them, because they are in darkness, and do not know the Truth in any thing. They believe they are very Learned, and they are nothing but <sup>(n)</sup> ignorants, being turn'd away from the Truth by so many Novelties which they have made them believe. They will needs maintain the *Roman Church* to be holy, and own her Councils as acted by the Holy Spirit, while neither the one nor the other is true. For the Church <sup>(o)</sup> is the *Babylon* of confusion, and the Councils are the means

<sup>(n)</sup> *Rom.* 1. 22. <sup>(o)</sup> *Rev.* 17. 5.



by which the Devil has withdrawn Christians from the Law of God, they having Ordain'd so many outward things, that the inward may be forgotten; and that thro' so many Natural things, People may think no more of the Spiritual. Their Commands, their Sacraments, their Indulgences, are all diversions from Salvation, to obtain which there is nothing needful for all persons, even those who are without God's Grace, and straying from the way of Salvation, (p) but the observing the Commands of God, and the Doctrine of the Gospel; for God will never give any other Commands, and Jesus Christ will never give any other Counsels, than those he has given us by his Doctrine of the Gospel: He says, *That he is not (q) come for the Righteous, but for sinners.* This being so, all sinners, who desire to be converted, must take up this Gospel-Life, by which they shall certainly attain to Salvation, since Jesus Christ is the way to it: But the Devil to divert men, has introduc'd by these Councils so many diverse things, that this Doctrine is destroyed. To discover this Truth, Sir, you need but observe mens Behaviour: This will give you certain Evidences of it; for you will see that all trust on the Councils, the Sacraments, and the Ordinances of the Church; and no body observes the Counsels of the Gospel, which are so banish'd out of the minds of men now, that they reckon them foolishness.

*I intreated her to tell me if she was sent from God to declare the Truth to men?*

*She said, Yes, Sir, I AM SENT FROM GOD TO BRING LIGHT TO THE WORLD, AND TO BEAR WITNESS OF THE TRUTH,* as he does all his works in *Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth,* and never surprizes any Body. He has SENT me to tell, *That the Last Times are come; That the World is Judged, and the sentence is irrevocable; That the Plagues are begun, and will not cease till all evil be rooted out; and that Jesus Christ will come shortly on the Earth to finish this, and then he will continue to Reign with men of good will, who shall enjoy Eternal Peace.*

(p) 1 Cor. 7. 19. (q) Math. 9. 13.



I AM SENT with a Commission to declare all these things to men, to the end that, peradventure, some of them may be Converted and Repent, that they may Reign with Jesus Christ in his Glory: But wickedness is come to so great an height, that the Truth can't be declar'd to Men, at least they will not any more receive it: They love nothing but (r) Flattery and lies, and reject the Truth, because it agrees not with their way of Living; for he who will continue in his Sins and Errors, will say, that we trouble him, by Declaring the Truth to him; and he who will not amend, will say, that we raise scruples to him, by telling him the Truth, that reproves him. Thus all the World perishes, without being delirous to be helped.

I AM CERTAINLY SENT FROM GOD, to declare the Truth of every thing: But no body will hear it but in so far as it is agreeable to them, and does not reprove them. Should I study Sir, to please Men or God? A Messenger ought not to receive either Good or Ill, when he is but the Minister of good, or ill News, without having caus'd them. I have lov'd the *Roman Church*, for I was born and baptized under her; and have punctually follow'd her Ordinances, and the decisions of her Councils when I knew them: But since God has made me see, that she is unfaithful to him, and has forsaken him to join herself to the Devil, ought I not to declare these truths to my Christian Brethren, who are ignorant of them, that they may not perish in their ignorance? They would be much to blame to render me evil for good, and to persecute me for procuring their Salvation; for I have no advantage by declaring these truths to them, except the obedience I owe to God, and the charity I have for their Souls; for otherwise I should be-ware of speaking things that are so disagreeable to them.

I ask'd her, *What person on Earth could be so wicked, as to persecute her for declaring simply the truth that comes from God without any passion?*

She said, Sir, all good men will perceive abundant-

ly by my words that I am not mov'd by any vicious passions; but by a pure desire of declaring the truth; because I neither seek nor pretend to any thing from any body: The friendship and hatred of men is all one to me, there is nothing but the pleasing or displeasing of God that touches me. Notwithstanding the Devil having so great a number of his adherents who are in authority, he will excite them to rise up against me, because of the truth which discovers his wickedness. He has for a long time ruled in the Church under a colour of Holiness, by which means he has gain'd the most Pious to be his Followers without their perceiving it: But as soon as the Truth shall be shewn them, they will easily discover his deceits, and will abhor them. This will enrage him against me, and (s) he will pursue me with all his force. But I do not fear that he shall be able to touch me; for God is my defence. I will not fear all those Enemies, how Powerful soever they may be. The Lord whom I serve is above all things. I have never done Evil to any Body; but all sort of good to all, according to my Power. Nevertheless I shall not fail to be pursu'd and Persecuted by all those who are the Devil's adherents; because by my means his head (t) will be bruised, and he will gain none any longer but by force; for his falsehoods and deceits will be discovered and brought to Light for those who desire to see and know them: God indeed never forces any Body, but he sends his Light into the World, that every one that pleases may receive it. I AM CREATED FOR THIS, and cannot be silent, when it shall be time to speak I will speak, both in publick and private, when it shall please God, but still the truth, without straying from it. I doubt not but at first they will suspect me to be a *Heretick*, because the *Roman Church* condemns, as such, all those who do not yield to her sentiments; and for my part, I look on all those as *Hereticks*, who are contrary to the doctrine of the Gospel, among which those *Romanists* are the first: But this is a maxim which the Devil ordinarily observes, to lay the blame on others of all the evils which he does himself: By this means they will find the way to declare me a

(s) Rev. 12. 13, 17. (t) Gen. 3. 15. Confer. Rev. 12.

11. and 17.

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*Heretick*, because they (u) have denied the Doctrine of Jesus Christ.

I said to her, *That the Roman Church would be a strong adversary, for she has great power and authority, and will yield to nothing that is not agreeable to her Doctrine.*

\* *She said, Sir, the power of that Romish Church shall be very shortly taken away by the Lord of Hosts who will (y) destroy her in such a manner that of all those magnificences there shall not be one stone left upon another. All her members shall be disjoynted, and dislocated, and without power. She must bear rule yet for a little time, and exercise her villanies outwardly, as she has done for this long time inwardly; her murders and imprisonments are at the door, to the end her evil may have its full accomplishment, both inward and outward. Till then God will let her go on, because his justice never inflicts a perfect punishment (z) till the evil be perfect and compleat in all respects; for evil always (a) begets punishment, according to the greatness of the evil the punishment is measured out. I have no apprehension of her power; because he who has given it, will take it from her. She will not do so much evil in killing bodies, as she does now in killing Souls; for it will be the happiness of those (b) who shall die for the real truth, if they receive it. For hitherto it has not been yet discover'd, nothing of the Holy Scripture has been explain'd in its perfect sense, every one has drawn conjectures from it according to his Light, not according to what is in it in effect; thus they might well die for holding some opinion which was not the real truth, but the opinion of some Author, for which they might die indeed without being for this the *Martyrs* of Jesus Christ. For to be such, a man must die for the Defence of the Law of God, and the Doctrine of the Gospel, or otherwise he cannot be a *Martyr* before God, however men call many others by this name; this shews that there is obscurity and darkness through all; even in the*

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(u) *Luk.* 18. 8. *Tir.* 1. 16. (x) *Mat.* 24. 2. *Rev.* 17. and 18. (y) *Rev.* 6. 10, 11. (13. 7.) (z) *Mat.* 23. 32, 33. *Rev.* 18. 5. (a) *Jer.* 2. 19. (b) *Rev.* 14. 13.



most holy things. Every one walks in the dark, not discerning the pure Truth: Even many who have the best Maxims, would judge indeed that I were an Heretick, in speaking against the Decrees of the Councils of Rome, out of a pious belief that they have been all held by the Cooperation of the Holy Spirit. Which is a false Supposition: For the Holy Spirit never changes. With what he inspir'd the Apostles, he inspires also at present those who hear him: They are always the same things.

I said to her, That the Holy Spirit did sometimes inspire diverse Means for the attainment of the same End.

She said, 'Tis true, Sir, if the Means which those Councils set before us did all aim at the keeping of the Commands of God, and at his Doctrine of the Gospel, I should believe that they came from the Holy Spirit; but when they aim at a quite contrary sense, I may well judge that they come not from thence; because God never contradicts himself: He has commanded, that we love him with all our Heart; and these Councils say, that to get the Pardon of our Sins, and obtain Salvation, it suffices that we have a sorrow for sin out of fear of Hell. Can these two contrary senses come from the same God? And there are so many other things which are variously oppos'd to the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, (as I have told you formerly); as the baptizing little Infants; and a Thousand other things, which are directly contrary to the Doctrine of Jesus Christ: I know indeed, that they deny this Truth, saying, that they have ordain'd nothing contrary to the Law of God: For with studied Words and Terms they cover all their Faults; and I am neither a Philosopher nor Divine to answer their artificial Arguments or studied Words; but I say in truth, that they do in effect directly contrary to the Law of God, and the Doctrine of the Gospel: Not that they say so; but they do it: And Deeds are more (c) than Words. I doubt not but they would surprize me by my Words: For the Devil has nothing but Subtilties wherewith to cover his Malice: But they cannot surprize me in the matter of the Essential Truth, which abides always true. They might say indeed, the Councils do not say that we ought not to love



God with all our Heart; but only that Attention is sufficient for Salvation: Is not that enough to teach indirectly that we are not obliged to love God? And is not this indirect Doctrine much worse than the direct, which no good Men would follow?

I asked, If the Light which she received from the Holy Spirit was contrary to what the Councils had ordained?

She said, Yes, Sir, the Decrees which the Councils have made (so far as I know them) are all directly contrary to what the Holy Spirit dictates to me. And you your self may perceive it: Though there were nothing but the forbidding to read the Gospels and the Holy Bible in the Vulgar Tongue, is not this contrary to the Doctrine of Jesus Christ; who has given his Word rather to the vulgar and simple People, than to the Learned (d)? And if it had not been his Will they should read it after his Death, he would not have left it them in Writing. This is the Nourishment of the Children of God (e): And these Councils would make them die for hunger. Is not also the forbidding Priests to labour against the Commandment of God, who ordained Adam (f) the most holy of all Men, to labour in penitence for his Sin? And the Oath which they cause the Priests to take not to receive any other Explications of the Holy Scriptures but those approved by the Church, is it not also against the Holy Spirit, who (g) offers every Moment to give new Light, which these Councils do not approve, because it would reprove them: For all that comes from the Holy Spirit reproveth Evil. There are also many other things which these Councils have ordained, that are contrary to the Light that God gives me which is wholly conformable to the Law of God and the Doctrine of Jesus Christ. I have no need to read any Books to know if they be edified by the Holy Spirit, because the Sentiment of my Soul gives me still evidence enough of them. When I understand only the substance of a thing, I perceive certainly, whether it come from the Holy Spirit or not. You may easily see, Sir, by all that I have already told you, that this Church and her Councils

(d) 1 Cor. I. 27, 28. (e) Mat. 4. 4. (f) Gen. 3. 19.  
(g) Joel 2. 28, 29. John 16. 13. Phil. 3. 15. 1 Thess. 5. 19, 20.

are not guided by the Holy Spirit; but (b) by the Spirit of Error, which deceives all the World under this false Masque of the Holy Church and Holy Councils, whereby the most Innocent let themselves be ruled by the Devil at his pleasure, while they believe that they follow the Truth, which is God.

## The Ninth Conference,

*Speaks of the Sins which we commit in another; and that to declare the Truth of Evil, is not Sin.*

I said to her, I was more certain that she was guided by the Holy Spirit, than that the Church and her Councils were so; and therefore she must tell me what I ought to do.

She said: Sir, You may indeed lean to my Sayings, because I speak nothing of my self. It is true, it seem'd somewhat hard to you, that I overturn the Church and her Councils; and also when I say that the Devil rules them: But I know this by the Light of the Holy Spirit, which obliges me to declare it, perhaps for the enlightning of others, that they may be converted; or to give them a full Measure, that no body may pretend Ignorance: For if I were not prest in my Conscience, I would beware to speak of such Evils, as one trembles to hear them. It were more pleasant and agreeable if I could say in truth, that the Church is guided by the Holy Spirit, and that Rome is the Church of God. This Discourse, would comfort my Soul, and give content to all those who are under her Obedience. But this not being true, I should flatter them to their destruction: Whereas the true knowledge of Things may save them. You have been also troubled sometimes to hear me say that all men now are

in a state of Damnation, which notwithstanding is most true; and if I could say in truth the contrary, I would be lov'd and follow'd by all those who believe they are in a state of Grace: But because I can't speak a Lie, every one leaves me that they may flatter themselves with fine Hopes; Truth seeming to them more hard than Damnation; though the one be much more lovely than the other; Because Truth enlightens alwayes the Understanding; though it be sometimes hard to Sense, yet it can lead us to Salvation, and make us happy to all Eternity; whereas Damnation renders us for ever miserable. 'Tis a trouble to us to be told that we are out of the way of Salvation, and we ought rather to be grieved for being ignorant of the truth in those Things which concern our Eternal Happiness: (i) The ignorance of this occasions our Damnation. Therefore, Sir, never be troubled any more to hear me tell the Truth in evil Things; for it is much more useful than to have it declared in good Things. For if I should say to you, that you are in a state of Salvation, your Soul should receive no advantage thereby: On the contrary, it might be tainted thereby with Vain-glory, or contract a sloth in that which is good: And if I should say to you, that the *Roman Church* is Holy, and guided by the Holy Spirit, it would be of no advantage to you, since you obey her as much already as if she were really Holy: You could not gain any thing by my saying so. So that to know the Truth of Good is much less profitable than to know the Truth of Evil, from which one cannot preserve himself without knowing it. This the Devil knowing, he has found the way to introduce into the Church a Maxim, That we ought never to speak evil of any, though it were true. They call this the *Sin of Detraction*; that her Evil may be still concealed, and none may dare to discover it for fear of committing a sin. It were good we knew in what place the Holy Spirit has declared, That to tell the Truth of Evil is a sin: For if this were true, Jesus Christ would have committed many sins, when he publicly called the Priests and Pharisees, (k) *Hypocrites, Generation of Vipers*, and so many other Names, discovering their Wickedness and Falshood, saying, That they were *whited Sepulchers*,

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(i) *Isa.* 4. 13. (k) *Mat.* 12. 34. *Chap.* 23.

*fair without, but within full of dead mens bones ; and that they made clean the out-side, leaving the in-side full of uncleanness.* Could all these Truths discovered by Jesus Christ, be sins of Detraction ? as they have perswaded all those which declare such Truths ; since all that Jesus Christ did while he was upon Earth, was to give us an Example ? Is it not evident enough, Sir, that the calling that sin, to declare the Truth of another mans Evil, has been invented by the Devil, to cover his filthiness, and that all sort of sins and Evils might be cherished by the privacy of them ? For the most part of good men endeavour to excuse and cover them, believing they do well in it, though notwithstanding it be a very ill thing, because it is hurtful Three several ways: *First*, to him that does evil, who will not amend so easily while his evil is conceal'd as if it were discovered : *Secondly*, It is very prejudicial to him to whom the evil is done ; because it is very hard to avoid or guard against an unknown Evil : And *Thirdly*, To the Person who conceals anothers Evil, who co-operates to the Evil of him that does it, and of him that receives it ; and nevertheless, they call that great Good of declaring the Truth of Evil, the *Sin of Detraction*. This unhappy Silence makes all sort of Abominations daily to encrease in the sight of God ; because they having lost his Fear, they lose also that of Men ; since their sins cannot be discovered without offending God. This is also a Doctrine which the Devil hath invented, with so many others, to the end that every one may follow Antichrist, while they think they are doing well : For if it were a sin to declare the Truth of Evil, Jesus Christ would not have done it of his Apostles themselves, calling ( *l* ) St. Peter publicly *Satan*, and reproving him in all his Faults ; as the Apostles ( *m* ) afterwards did their Disciples : But these new Masters teach, That it is a sin to declare the Truth of Evil, without any other ground but that of covering their Wickedness, that their Evils may not be discovered, and they may commit them the more, by continuing in the Reputation of being good Men, though they be wicked. If they had considered well the Nine ways by which we

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( *l* ) Mat. 16. 23. ( *m* ) St. Paul to the Corinth. and Galat.



may sin in another, they would find, that 'tis a sin to conceal the Truth of Evil; whereas they teach, that 'tis one to discover it.

*I entreated she would explain to me the meaning of these sins which we commit in another; and if we are guilty of them, that I might guard against them.*

*She said:* Sir, We are as guilty (n) of the sins we commit in another, as of those which we our selves commit: for God regards not so much the Action (o) as the Intention. Sins being Spiritual Things, have no need of Material Acts. God \* searches the Heart and the Reins, and not so much the Feet, or the Hands. These inward Sins are so much the more dangerous than the outward, because we take less heed of them; for they are not so manifest and known, (p) though notwithstanding they be mortal and damnable sins. Every one excuses himself of them before Men: Which he cannot do before God; for Ignorance never excuses sin: If we are very careful and diligent to know and discover what is necessary and profitable for our Body, we are obliged to be much more so as to our Soul. 'Tis not enough that one says he knows not these sins, because every one is obliged to know them; and our Salvation or Damnation depends upon them: For he who sins ignorantly, goes ignorantly to Hell. We are created for no other end but for Salvation: This is the only Affair of Importance that concerns us most nearly; for setting aside Salvation, all is perishing. For this cause we must study to discover what Sin is.

Therefore to satisfy your Demand, I will explain the Nine Ways by which we offend God in another.

*First,* We commit sin in counselling to do evil. How many are there who are guilty of this sin without perceiving it? If you have a Friend affronted, you will say to him, *I would not suffer this Affront without revenging my self:* Or you will tell him, *You would not have the Heart to suffer it;* and such like things: Or if we give any Counsel that is not according to the Righteousness, Goodness, or Truth of God; or if we counsel any to do evil for our pleasure, or profit, or otherwise. These Counsels are as

(n) Rom. 1. 32. 1 Tim. 5. 12. (o) Mat. 5. 28. John 8. 44. \* Jer. 17. 20. (p) Psal. 19. (18) 13.

many Sins as the wicked Actions which those commit whom we have counsel'd to do them, whether they be in Word or Deed; because our Advice is often the cause why the Sin is done: By a just Title then, we ought to bear the punishment of it; as we shall certainly do before God, who looks more to the Wickedness of the Heart than to the evil Actions: And he who counsels another to do evil, is sometimes more wicked than he who does it out of compliance to his Counsellour, or out of the esteem he has for him. Those in Offices, or Attorneys and Advocates who give Counsel, and not according to straight Justice and Truth, do often fall into these Sins, and therefore they ought to be condemn'd of the same guilt with him who commits the evil Deeds to which they have advised him; for they have both equally contributed thereunto, and the Counsellour often with more Wickedness than the Doer, because to counsel Evil is worse than to do it.

*Secondly*, He who supports Evil commits also the same sin with him who does it, because if Evil were not supported, it would not be so often committed: Therefore, the Supporter of Evil causes the evil Deed, and gives the Man boldness to commit it the more; and therefore he who supports it, ought justly to bear the punishment of him who does it, yea, even more; for it would be in his power to hinder it, by not supporting it. Those are doubly guilty, that is, of the support that they themselves give, and of the Evil done by the other, which he would not do, if he were not supported in it.

The *Third Way* by which we commit sin in another, is, In *commanding to do Evil*. In which Fathers and Mothers, Masters and Mistresses, and other Superiours, do very often fall; who command those under them, to do something that is not just or good. These are guilty of as many sins as they command their Subjects or Inferiours, who very often, if they were left to themselves, would not, or durst not, commit the Evils which are commanded them: Though Inferiours are not obliged, and never ought, to obey the Commands which are given them to do evil, yet the Commanders cease not to offend mortally

only by commanding it; as an Inferiour commits a mortal sin in doing the Evil which has been commanded him, because the sins of the one cannot lessen the sins of the other, but both are guilty of the same commanded sins. In which many are deceived, who believe that 'tis lawful for them to do the Evils which have been enjoyed them by Father, Mother, Masters, or Mistresses, or any other Superiours, whosoever they be; as also such Superiours deceive themselves, who are perswaded that they have not committed sins, when they act not in the evil Deeds; for truly, and in the sight of God, they commit as many as they have commanded to be done; for if their Wills were not evil, they would never advise to do evil, much less command it.

The *Fourth* way by which we offend God by another, is, When we *commend or approve Evil*. This is very common in this Age, wherein evil Doers are commended. When we see any one avenge himself of an Affront, we will say, He shews that he has Courage; we are ready even to praise Children that are malicious in defending themselves, as well as others, who give blow for blow; or those (r) who signalize themselves by Pomp and Vanity; or we praise those who exceed in Feasting, or other Evils, whatever they be. Now the Praise of Evil incites Men to do it the more, and encourages them to commit it the more boldly. And therefore he who praises it, is guilty of as many sins as he who does the Evil.

The *Fifth* Way by which we offend God in another, is, In *partaking of the Evil*; as, when one has some Advantage by the Evil done by another; or, if any one profit by the Theft which another commits, whether by buying what is stolen, or eating and drinking it, or by enjoying some ill-gotten Goods: So also he who makes gain by the Gluttony or Drunkenness, or other sins which other Men commit. By all these Things Men are partakers of other Mens sins, and thereby do the same Evil with him who directly commits it, yea, even more; because he who commits Theft, or any other actual Wickedness, runs the hazard of his Life, or of other corporal Punishments; but he who partakes in it only, lives without fear

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(r) *Psal.* 49. (48) 18.

though he be equally guilty with him who commits it, nevertheless he does not undergo the same Penance in this World; neither does he acknowledge his Faults, that he may give satisfaction for it in the other: Therefore his sin is so much the more dangerous, because he does not weigh it as it is weigh'd before God.

The Sixth Way that we offend God in another, is, When we take pleasure in another Mans sins; as he who takes pleasure to see Men fight a Duel, or otherwise; or is pleased that another cheats cunningly, or steals handsomely, or provides for his Accommodations with Luxury and Vanity. Thus, wharever the Evil be, the pleasure that we take in seeing another do Evil, is sin: For he who loves God, ought to be grieved (s) for all kind of Evil that he sees committed by others, as well as for what he commits himself.

The Seventh Way, is, When we do not correct Evil, as much as is in our power; as, Fathers, Mothers, Masters, Mistresses, who tolerate the Evil of their Children or Inferiours, because they desire not to offend them, or for some other humane Respect, or even out of softness of Temper, or natural Goodness, suffering Evil rather than they will correct it, when they are oblig'd to do it. All these are guilty of the same Evils with their Children or Inferiours; for their tolerating them is the cause that they are habituated and continue in Evil, who might have amended if they had been rebuked and chastised for it. Thus, many will be damn'd who are not apprehensive of it: For all the Evils which Subjects or Inferiours commit for want of reproof, will be laid to the charge of Superiours, as if they themselves had committed them by their own Deed (t), because of the Obligation that lyes on them to correct Evil, and their neglecting to do it upon whatsoever pretext.

The Eighth Way that we offend God in another, is, When we do not hinder Evil when we may do it; as, if Two Persons quarrel or fight, and we might pacifie or divert them, nevertheless we will not give our selves the trouble, either through sloth, or humane respect, or some other cause; or when we see one ready to do evil, and we might

(s) Jer. 9. 1. 2 Cor. 12. 21. (t) Ezek 33. 6, 7, 8.

hinder



hinder it by admonishing him; or discovering his Evil by crying out, or otherwise; which we omitting, we commit the same Evil with him who does it, when it is in our power to hinder it by what way soever this might be, as by giving too much liberty to those under our Charge, or leaving them in dangerous occasions, or giving them Money, or other things, with which they take occasion to offend God. In all these, and divers other Cases, we are guilty of the sins which others commit, by not hindring them, when we might have done it.

The Ninth and Last is, That we do not tell the Evils that we know of others to those who might put a stop to them; as, in not telling the Faults of Children, Scholars or Servants, to Fathers, Superiours or Masters, who might prevent them. Silence, in this respect, does as much Evil as the Faults which are committed without the knowledge of the Superiours, because if they were known to them, they might hinder or correct them; which they not doing, being ignorant of them, the fault and blame falls upon those who conceal them, whether to please the Evil doers, or upon any other pretext whatsoever, because by their silence in some manner they co operate to the sin. Nevertheless, there are very few who are apprehensive of these kinds of sins, and much less do they repent of them; for they imagine, they are not guilty of them, because they have not committed them effectively in their own Persons; yet they will be all imputed to them as well as if they had personally committed them; and they cannot be excused through ignorance, because all Christians are obliged to know what they ought to do or avoid; for Jesus Christ and his Apostles have set down all for him who will take the pains to search for it. But the darkness is so great, that they perceive not the things that are necessary; and they live in such a negligence of their Salvation as if they were assur'd of it, though they be very far from it; because *no (x) unclean thing shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Those who enter there must be holy. None can otherwise (y) draw near to God, the Source of all Purity and Holiness. In which many are deceiv'd who believe that Holiness belongs only to the Perfect, whom

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(x) Rev. 21. 27. (y) Heb. 12. 14.

they imagine to be some singular Persons: And yet with our Holiness no Man shall ever be saved.

I said to her, That very few Persons consider'd these things, and scarce any look on themselves as guilty of those sins which they commit in another, no more than of those which they commit against the Holy Ghost, because they perceive not that they are guilty of them; though notwithstanding I see clearly, that those who are esteemed holy or perfect are tainted both with the one and the other of the said sins.

She said: Sir, I am well pleased that you begin to discover that by which the World is condemn'd; that you may not need to believe it blindly; for if you perceive clearly that the Holy and the Perfect now are polluted with the sins which they commit in another, and with those against the Holy Ghost, those whom they call Wicked are visibly defiled with divers kinds of Actual Sins: Which is known to all the World. Of whose Salvation then can you hope for? The Wicked bring their Condemnation upon them through their obstinacy in a wicked Life; and the Good draw it on by the sins which they commit in another, and those against the Holy Ghost, which they will not know, and much less amend, because they presume upon the certainty of their Salvation without all these Circumstances whereby they might discover the state of their Souls, or the Sins with which they may be defiled, which are Spiritual, and of which through blindness they are insensible. Hereby the Proof is just of the World's being universally judged, because the sins are universal; which sins (2) do judge and condemn Souls. For God judges no Body: He only fulfils all Righteousness; and those who shall be condemned, shall be so always by their own sins, and never otherwise. And if Sins condemn, then all they who live in them do bear their Condemnation: And since we see that in this Age neither the Good nor the Wicked are free from sins, we cannot but see and confess, that the whole World is judg'd and condemn'd, and that we are arriv'd at the general Judgment, seeing generally sin rules and bears sway. We must not look for any other condemnation but that of our own sins known to Gods Justice, which condemns always all that's unjust, without hatred

(2) Jer. 2. 19.

and without favour. The Righteous Ballance of this Divine Justice being still kept steady by a Hand that never shakes, does always condemn Unrighteousness.

I said to her, That I was wholly convinc'd by so clear and true Arguments: That I acknowledg'd, without doubt, the World was generally judg'd by its general Sins; asking her, if while this Sentence was putting in execution, there were not means whereby a Man might be converted.

She said: Yes, Sir, there are means of Conversion as long as we have life. There is place for Repentance till Jesus Christ shall come upon the Earth, and root out all Evil; yea, even when he shall come (a) there will be yet hopes of Pardon: Therefore he says, (b) That Sinners and Harlots shall inherit the Kingdom, and the Children thereof shall be cast out; because these wicked Persons may be yet converted, and acknowledge their sins; whereas those Children of the Kingdom, who esteem themselves holy and religious, continuing obstinate in the presumption of their Salvation, will be cast out, though they be called the Children of God and of his Kingdom. There are therefore means of Conversion for those who will repent and change their manner of Life, even though they were the greatest Sinners of the World; yea, even for those who are full of the sins against the Holy Ghost, or of the sins committed in another, provided they get out of their darkness, and receive the Truth. For these ends (c) God puts his last Sentence in execution slowly, and sends his Plagues one after another, that he may give time and leisure to all those who desire to be converted, to do penitence: In which he still exercises the Effects of his Almighty Goodness and Mercy, (d) not willing that a sinner should perish, but that he live and be converted. The sins against the Holy Ghost will be forgiven as well as other sins, provided they repent of them; which they not doing, they shall no more be pardoned when Jesus Christ shall come upon the Earth, than at present: For where there is no Repentance, there can be no pardon; for this cause the sins against the Holy Ghost will be very rarely

(a) Revel. 1. 7. (b) Matth. 8. 11, 12. & 21. 31, 32.

(c) Wisd. 12. 2. & 10. (d) 2 Pet. 3. 9.

pardoned, because they are very seldom repented of and amended.

**The Tenth Conference,**  
*Shews what Souls shall be happy; and ex-  
plains the Eight Beatitudes.*

I asked her, By what means we might know or discover those who are truly converted to God.

She said : Sir, Take the Eight Beatitudes which Jesus Christ (e) has declared, and see if those who say they are converted do possess them : For these only shall be blessed, and no others. Many say by word that they would be converted, and be wholly for God ; and notwithstanding, there are no appearances of it. These are nothing but wouldings without effect, with which we deceive the World and our selves, and think to deceive God ; which cannot be, for he is too penetrat'g, and is not amus'd with Words ; therefore he has told us the Marks that one must have of true Conversion, and of a Right to Blessedness, by which real Converts may be discern'd from Hypocrites.

First, He calls *those blessed who are poor in Spirit*; to wiew, that all they whose Heart or Will is yet bent to the desire of having Wealth and Temporal Riches, are not converted nor blessed; because he who yet desires Earthly Goods, is not converted to Eternal Goods; for these Two Affections cannot dwell together (f). However we say we are converted to God, we lie, so long as we are not poor in Desires, and that we still covet Earthly Things.

Secondly, Jesus Christ calls those blessed who are meek; to shew, that they who are converted to God do always partake of his Goodness, and do good to all as they are able.

(c) Mat. 5. 3-10.



*note* we hear People often say, that they are wholly devoted to God, while on occasions we see them chagrin, angry, froward, at variance with their Neighbours, quarrelling instead of bearing with them, or doing them no good but by constraint. Such are not converted, no more than they who in this World seek their Pleasure and Contentment, because Jesus Christ says, *Blessed are they that mourn*; and when we see that they will not endure or suffer any thing, but seek their Ease, Honour and Contentment, that they may live in as much Mirth as they can, these are not converted, and *do* not willingly mourn under persecution.

*note* *Song 16* *Non.* Fourthly, We know those that are converted to God, when they hunger and thirst after Righteousness: that is, thirst earnestly to become righteous, and seek the means and occasions to attain to this Righteousness. These are not converted who content themselves with their own Righteousness and Vertue, without aspiring to Gods Righteousness, or thirsting after true Virtue; but are more careful for Earthly Things, than for those which are Eternal.

*note* The Fifth Mark that Jesus Christ has given whereby to know those who are converted, and shall be blessed, is Mercy. As long as we see Mens Hearts hardened, without Charity for their Neighbour, minding only their own Interest, and not caring for the Troubles and Necessities of their Neighbours, these are not converted; because they have no Mercy, which is a Mark of True Conversion.

*note* The Sixth Mark is purity of Heart. He who delights in dishonest Thoughts or Actions, cannot be converted; nor he who is subtil, and not sincere in his Dealings, but deceitful and over-reaching, bearing envy or ill-will to another. None of these are of a pure and clean Heart, and so are not converted to God nor blessed; for a pure Heart is still upright, simple and chaste: By which we may discover if it be converted to God. As also if a Man be a Peace-maker, and of a peaceable Disposition within himself, and toward his Neighbour; this is a Mark of Conversion to God. For he who should say he were converted, and nevertheless should live in trouble and disquiet within himself, or in Debates and Quarrels with his Neighbours, he would be a Liar; for conversion

to God brings along with it Peace, and Tranquillity, and Repose: This the Children of God experience, who alone can be called blessed and converted, they having the Marks that Jesus Christ has given whereby to know them from the Children of the Devil. That none may falsely persuade himself that he is converted, he declares all the Conditions necessary for this Conversion, that is, the Eight Beatitudes; the Eighth of which is, *to suffer Persecution for Righteousness sake.* Many believe they are happy when they are without sufferings; nevertheless, this is a sign that they are not faithful to God; for he who faithfully serves him, will certainly suffer, because the Devil and wicked Men will persecute him for Righteousness, and true Virtue; which is still reprehended by them. By this Touchstone true Converts may be known: For he who does not willingly suffer Persecution for Well-doing, desires not to imitate Jesus Christ, who is the true Pattern of all the Works which lead to Bliss; and none can be happy or sav'd but they who follow his Steps.

And we falsely persuade our selves of being converted to God if we possess not the Eight Beatitudes which Christ has publicly taught us: And as few as we see possess them, there are as few converted unto him. 'Tis all amusement to believe that any will be saved without the possession of these Eight Beatitudes, which Jesus Christ has given as Marks whereby to know his true Children from those who say they are, and are not.

And that you may not be deceived, Sir, I have explain'd them all to you, one by one, that you may know what manner of Persons these ought to be who in these last Times, and during the Plagues, desire to be converted to God, wherein many if they will may be converted: And that their Conversion may be true, they must still examine if they have these Eight Beatitudes, and they may be persuaded that as long as they have them not, they are not entirely converted; for Jesus Christ has said nothing in vain, and he has nam'd in particular all the Qualities the Blessed ordinarily have, without which they cannot be so. These are not the Speculations or Words of Men, but the Warnings of Jesus Christ himself, who cannot lie. Men would indeed glosse and dispute to amuse the World, but they can never change the Truth.

I said

I said to her, That the Behaviour of Men being well considered, it seem'd there were none now in the Grace of God, or in the Blessed Estate that Jesus Christ had marked out, but rather that all did abound in sin, and that Christ had not yet come. She said: Sir, It seem'd strange to you formerly, when I told you such things, because you had not examin'd it narrowly enough, and the darkness is so great, that the truth is not any longer discern'd. The Devil has so blinded Mens Minds, and distracted their Understandings, that they look to nothing now but the Appearance of Things, and not the reality of them. Every one believes he shall be happy, though he have not so much as one of the Eight Beatitudes. Either all the World must be deceived, or Jesus Christ has not pointed out aright the signs of those who are in a state of Salvation. For these Eight Beatitudes are not pronounced for those who are in Heaven; because all those who are with God, possess all the Beatitudes in perfection; and also there is no more persecution, nor Hunger or Thirst to be endured there; for there they are in perfect peace, and fully satisfied; neither is there any thing to be bewailed there, being in perfect joy; neither can they have poverty of Spirit, since they possess all things; there also there is no more occasion of shewing Mercy to their Neighbour, for none has need of any thing, the least of the Blessed possess more than the worth of Ten Thousand Worlds. By which it appears, that Jesus Christ speaks only of those who are upon Earth, who are oblig'd to have these Beatitudes if they would be saved, and come to the possession of the Promises made to each of the said Beatitudes, which are the certain Marks whereby to discover if we live in a state of Salvation or not. Nevertheless, no body examines himself upon this Head, to see if he have those Beatitudes, no more than if they were not proclaimed for us. We say them as a Litany, and not as things that we are oblig'd to put in practice. In which we deceive our selves; for no body will attain to the state of Blessedness, but he who in this World shall put these Eight Beatitudes in practice: And as far as Men are estranged from them, they are as far from their Salvation.

I asked her, What Remedy there was for such general Evils in which no body could be saved?

She

*She said* : Sir, I told you long ago that Paradise was shut, My meaning was, that no Body now at Death attains to Bliss ; because in their Life-time they make no Preparation for it, but they are every way estranged from God : For it is not now known what is Sin, nor yet what is Vertue : They imagine they are Vertuous when they do something that's good in appearance, and that they are not guilty of sin when they do not commit wicked Actions. This is the most crafty delusion of the Devil ; by which he certainly gains all the good through this blindness of Mind. This is an universal Evil, which makes me afraid that not one Person shall be saved ; because none do perceive their Evil but grosse Sinners who live in Actual sins : As for others, every Moment they take the Name of God in vain : One will say, *I trust in God* ; another, *God will help us* ; another, *God will shew us Mercy* ; and thus on a Thousand other occasions the Name of God is still in their Mouth, calling on him to co-operate in their sins : For when they say they trust in God while the Soul wallows in sin, is to desire that God would do Injustice : Wherefore they may wait long in this sort of confidence, and shall never obtain their Desire : For God cannot help those who go on in sin, without being unjust ; which he will never be. And he who says that God will help him, while he lives as People do at present, says that God will help him to sin ; which he cannot do : For he cannot contribute directly or indirectly to any Sin ; and if he assisted us in the way we live, he should contribute to many sins (g) which we commit : For if he assisted us to preserve our Temporal Goods, we would continue, yea, encrease our Pride, our Excesses and Vanities ; and if he delivered us from Wars, Peace would give us occasions to forget God, and to abandon our selves the more to bodily Pleasures and Sensualities ; and if he delivered us from our Miseries, of whatsoever kind, we would certainly be led to greater Evils : For Ease and Sloth engender all sort of Sins. And when we say, *God will have Mercy on us*, and nevertheless we go on in a state of sin, this is to blaspheme against the Righteousness of God : Because he can never have Mercy but (h) upon penitent Sinners : Which the Godly

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(g) *Isa.* 20. 10. (h) *Exod.* 20. 6. *Ezek.* 33. 12.



now a days are very far from ; for they encourage themselves in their Sins as if they were Vertues, and even call them by the Name of Vertues : For the Avarice of the Cloisters and of the Religious is call'd *Charity* done them ; and the Adorning of Altars, building of Houses and Magnificent Churches is call'd the *Honour of God*, though these be but Vanities and Superfluities by which God is greatly offended. For if at Baptism we have renounc'd the World and its Poms to become Christians, how can we adorn Churches, which we call the Temples of God, with the same Poms and Vanities, which Christians are not permitted to seek after in their own Persons, nor in what belongs to them ? How can it be allowed to use them in Places particularly dedicated to God, without tacitely Insinuating that God is served with our sins and Impurities, as are all (i) sort of Poms and Vanities, which are so common in Churches as well as in other places ? Nevertheless all this is covered with an Appearance of Vertue and Holiness. This renders all the World impenitent : For every one amuses himself with the belief of being sav'd in a state of Sin and Damnation ; Which is truly a desperate state ; because he who believes he is good, will never repent and much less will he do Penitence, and consequently he shall never obtain Pardon : For God cannot pardon (k) without Repentance. All the Remedy that I see in this, is a perfect Conversion unto God, and a New Birth, as if till now we had never been in the World : For all that we have done hitherto has been evil and blame-worthy in the sight of God, though to us all seem to be good ; through the Blindness of our Spirits, in which we have been so sunk, that no Body has seen whither he was going, more than we do in a very dark Night. Therefore Jesus Christ has said, That a man (l) must be born again, and become as a little Child, else he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. He speaks to those of the present Age : For if one do not re-enter into the Womb of the Rising Church, he cannot be sav'd.

(i) Mal. 2, 31. (k) Luke 13, 3. (l) Mat. 18, 3.

## The Eleventh Conference,

*Shews, how a Man must be born again to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: And that he must return to a Dependance upon God, which is the only thing that he essentially requires of Man.*

I asked her, *How this New Birth could be in those who are already advanc'd in Years and Learning?*

*She said:* Sir, We must take up a Life wholly new, as if to day we were newly born: Because all the good that we think we have done heretofore is all evil, or at least good for this Life onely: For all our good Works have still been attended with Self-love, or Humane Respects, (m) which can never be recompenc'd in Eternity, because we have here had their Reward. What we do out of Self-love is recompenc'd by our Satisfaction; and what we do out of Humane respects is recompenc'd by the complacency of Men: So that we can never in Justice pretend to any other thing; for we are fully satisfied in this World, according to the Pretensions or Ends we had in doing our good Works. Though they have been covered with a pretence of the Glory of God, or Charity to our Neighbours, yet in effect all this has been but Vanity. Therefore he who desires to be converted, must take up (n) a Life wholly new, and believe assuredly that he has never done so much as one Action purely for the Love of God. Which we may abundantly perceive by considering all the Sins against the Holy Ghost, and those which we commit by another, with the Eight Beatitudes, and the other solid Vertues. Every one may see thereby how far he is from the State of the Blessed that Jesus Christ has marked out in the Eight Beatitudes; and if he desire to recover them, what need he has to take up a Life wholly new, and to become as a new-born Infant, who lets him-

self be govern'd by his Heavenly Father. Neither Years nor Learning can hinder the resigning of our selves to God, that he may rule us as it shall please him : For the more we are advanc'd in Years, the more haste we ought to make to attain to Salvation, because we have no more Time but the small part of our Life that remains. The Conversion of those come to Years ought not to be delay'd one Day, because their Life may be gone, and then there is no Recovery ; for after Death (o) there is no Remission. The Learned ought also to consider, that all their Learning is nothing but Ignorance in the sight of God, which becomes often a hindrance to his Grace ; and that the Time is come, (p) *that he will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and abolish the prudence of the prudent, that all may (q) receive the Kingdom of Heaven as little Children.*

I said to her, *It was very desirable to be of the number of those true Converts, and that I would be the first who would resign all to God as a little Infant.*

She said: Sir, No body can be entirely converted if he do not know what is Sin, and also true Vertue. These Two Things are necessary : For otherwise one will think, he is converted while he is yet full of Sins, and has not acquir'd any solid Vertues. Therefore I have spoken so particularly to you, that you may not abide in the darkness which surrounds all the Men of the World. There may be yet many who desire to be converted : But few of these know their inward Sins, and yet fewer know what is true Vertue. All these would make false Conversions in the sight of God : For if one does not know his hidden Sins, he cannot amend them ; and if he know not what true Vertue is, he cannot put it in practice. The ignorance of these Two Things hinder a Man from being converted to God, or yielding himself to be governed by him. This is therefore what he ought first of all to learn, to know the state of his own Soul, in what degree of sin it is, and also in what degree of true Vertue. If these things were known, there be many who would embrace the Spirit of Penitence, and resign themselves to God as little Children : But because they know not the

(o) *Heb. 9. 27.* (p) *1 Cor. 1. 19.* (q) *Mark 10. 15.*  
state.

state of their own Conscience, many do insensibly perish (r) not knowing their Misery. If you desire, Sir, to be resign'd to God as a Child, think that all you have done hitherto is worth nothing; and cast (s) your self into the Arms of God, who is your Father, as a Child who cannot speak, that he may teach you all things. He will certainly do it: For he desires (t) our Conversion. When we withdraw from him by our Sins, he suffers it, because he will not take back the Free-will that he has once given us: For he is unchangeable (u) in all his Works: But as soon as we return to him by Penitence, he receives us as the Father did his Prodigal Son, owns us for (x) his Children, and the Heirs of his Glory. But if you resolve to adhere to your own Wisdom, you will never receive the Holy Spirit. You must become simple as a Child, and not use your own Will any longer, resigning and committing it wholly into the Hands of God, giving him the Reins of your Will, that he may guide and direct it as it shall please him; and that you may no longer abuse it, as you have done hitherto: Which you must acknowledge with Regret: For if our Will had been govern'd by God, we had never fallen into such Extremities of all Evils.

I said to her, *I must acknowledge my Will had not been govern'd by God, because I knew not as I do now the way how to resign my self to God.*

*She said:* Sir, No body can be saved who knows not that he must be entirely resigned to God: For this is the first and last Commandment that he has given to Man: And to say better; It is the only thing that God requires of Man. If we would absolutely depend upon God, we should fulfil all the Law and the Prophets. This is the one thing needful. All that ever I can say, Sir, is comprehended in THE DEPENDANCE that we ought to have upon God; for he has never demanded any other thing of Man (nor will he so long as the World shall last) but this Dependance, that he owes to God. It is a very small Matter that he asks of us. 'Tis a great Ingratitude also (y) for us to deny this Dependance upon him; since he is the Lord and Creatour of all Things, has created us of

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(r) *Isa.* 5. 13. (s) *Psal.* 37. 5. (t) *Ezek.* 18. 23. (u) *Rom.* 11. 29. (x) *Luke* 15. 24. (y) *Deut.* 32. 6.



Nothing, and gives us all that we have to enjoy in full Liberty, provided only we still acknowledge our Dependance upon him in all Things. This Great God could he demand less of a silly Worm of the Earth, than the Acknowledgment of Dependance upon its God? This is so just a Thing, that though God had never declared to Man that he desir'd this of him, he was oblig'd always to acknowledge it; since all came truly from him, and he had bestow'd on him so many Favours and Prerogatives, which should oblige him to a continual Gratitude, even though he had never had any thing beyond Natural Reason: For it is said, that even Brute and Cruel Beasts have been sensible of a Benefit received from Men all the Days of their Life; and Man endued with so accomplish'd an Understanding will not acknowledge the Dependance he has upon God, nor yield up his Will to his, even though he be so good (z) as to desire it! For if God were not an Excess of Goodness, he would rather disdain Men of so little Worth, than permit them to unite their Will to his. Nevertheless, he permits and desires it, yea, rejects and threatens those who will not do it; as Jesus Christ threatened St. Peter (a), when he would not be washed by him. If we had but a little of Judgment, we would entreat God, to permit not only that our Will may be united to his; but rather, that ours may be wholly annihilated, and that he may exercise his own over us only and absolutely.

I asked her, *What she meant by saying*, That the Acknowledgment of our Dependance upon God, was the only Commandment, *since God had given us so many others?*

*She said*: Sir, There is no Essential Commandment but this. All the rest are Accidental. For when God created Adam, and in him all Men, he gave him Power over all Sublunary Things (b), having made all the Beasts subject to him, that he might rule over all as a Little God, without any Reservation, except that he should always acknowledge the Dependance that he had upon his Creator: Which being done by him, he might rule over all Things as a dependent Deity. And for a Token of this Dependance, he forbade him to eat of the Fruit of one Tree only, per-

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(z) *Irev.* 23. 26. (a) *John* 3. 8. (b) *Psal.* 8. 7.

mitting him to eat of all the rest. The meaning of which was, that Man might enjoy, use, and rule over all Things, provided always he acknowledg'd his Dependance on the Supream Deity, of whom he held all Things. And if *Adam* had not forgotten himself by quitting this Dependance and desiring to depend upon himself, he should never have received any other Command from God, nor yet any Man after him. But the Righteousness of God oblig'd him to lay other Commands on Man for the Penance of his Disobedience. He enjoyn'd him (c) *to till the Ground, and to gain his Bread with the sweat of his Face*, which was the Second Command that God gave to Man, which nevertheless was only Accidental through the Fall of *Adam*, and not Essential by the Will of God, who lov'd rather to see him free, without being subjected to any other Thing but Himself alone. And his giving the Commands to *Moses* for the Children of *Israel* was also Accidental: For if they had not fallen into so many different Sins, which took them off from their Dependance upon God, he would never have given them divers Commandments: But fearing lest his People should perish through Ignorance, he still gave them new Commands, that by the help of them they might know their Sins and amend them; else God would never have constrain'd Man to any other thing, but to acknowledge him as the Superior of all Things: For God created him to take (d) his Delight with him in full liberty and without contraint, and was not willing to subject him to any other Law (e) but that of Love. By which we see that all the other Commands are but Accidentally appointed, because of the Sins that Men had committed at divers times, who if they would now return to this Dependance upon God, would have no need of any other Precept or Commandment; for all the rest are only Means to bring us to this Dependance upon God, and that we may see and discover all that hinders us from resigning our Will to God's, and that discovering them by the Commands, we may leave them and amend, and so may be able to return to this Dependance which was first enjoyn'd us as the one thing necessary for Salvation: And is still so now as well as then.

(c) Gen. 3. 17, 19. (d) Prov. 8. 31. (e) Cant. 2. 4.

## The Twelfth Conference,

*Shews, That there is one thing only to be done by us that we may be saved.*

I said to her, *That it was very agreeable to bear, that there was but one thing only to be done in order to Salvation : And that I would gladly take that short way.*

*She said : No, Sir, 'Tis true, there is but one thing only to be done that we may be saved (f) : But there are many things to be parted with, which do greatly hinder and distract us. We neglect to do that which is necessary to attain to this Dependance, and we do that which alienates us from it. The Penitence which God enjoyn'd Adam, To gain his Bread with the Sweat of his Face, is very little regarded among Men now. Every Body would live without Labour, and they esteem it a Happiness to have Riches that they may live in Ease. This is indeed to thwart the Means that God has so savingly taught us. After that Adam sin'd, and all Men in him, of his own free choice he left off this Dependance upon God, that he might become wise of himself : Thus he render'd himself miserable with all his Posterity : Because all the Miseries that we suffer are procured by the following our own Wills. We must not impute all our Miseries to Adam, but only to the Sins that we our selves commit. If we had no other but the Sin of Adam, we should need nothing but the Pennance of Labour to gain our Bread, and the enduring the Intemperance of the Elements : But our own Sins bring upon us a Thousand other Sufferings. If we would labour, and suffer Cold and Heat, or other Intemperances of the said Elements, and return again to the Dependance of our Wills upon Gods, (g) we should be very quickly restored to the Blessed State wherein Adam was created : For our Penitence should be accomplish'd in this short Life, which by the Mercy of God is much*

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(f) *Luke* 10. 42. (g) *Psal.* 81. 14, 17.

shortned; and then we should enjoy an Eternal Bliss, which should never end: But since our Actual Self will would not depend upon God, but upon its self, bending it self to follow its own Inclinations, it has procured us a great Number of other Evils, which we attribute to God, or to *Adam*; and if we consider them aright, we will evidently perceive that they derive their dominion from our Self-will, and not from any other thing: For our Diseases are ordinarily procured by our Intemperance in Eating and Drinking, or other Sensual Excesses which we commit to satisfy our own Will; which oftentimes drives us to some State that causes us a Thousand Sorrows, or to some Employment, or Trade that brings us into great trouble of Law-suits, Quarrels, Vexations, or to Poverty and other Miseries. And the Cause of all this is, that we would not submit our Will to Gods, who would have govern'd us, as a good Father does his Son, we having chosen rather to follow our own Will, and to undergo all sort of Calamities in this World, and run the hazard of suffering far greater hereafter, which shall never end: For he who will not be guided by God, can never be saved; since our own Conduct will lead us to the Abyss of all sort of Evils, both Temporal and Eternal: Because our own Will is ignorant, and rash, never content nor satisfied, never stopping for any sort of Evil: Even though it discover its Miseries it does not amend them, but imputes them to another, either to *Adam*, or even to God: And thus flattering our selves always in our own Will, we persist therein even to death, which gives beginning to a miserable Eternity: For no Body can be saved by himself; and if we do not yield up our Will to God, from whom can we expect Salvation? 'Tis a great Blindness, Sir, not to see these Truths, which are so evident, since we feel our Weakness, and know that we have receiv'd all from God, and that we can hope for nothing but from him. And notwithstanding of all these Considerations we will not resign our Will to his, choosing rather to be miserable, and to perish at last by following our own. We are unthankful to God, and cruel to our selves: For indeed, 'tis a great Ingratitude to deny God the only thing he demands of us, our own Will, having given us all other things; and 'tis a great Cruelty to our selves to with-



withdraw our Dependance upon God, and subject our selves to so many sorts of Evils.

I asked her, *How it was possible that Men should deny the yielding up their Will to God, since all appertains to him?*

She said: Sir, All the World does this in effect, and I know not so much as one Person upon Earth that will depend upon the Will of God: For every one will needs follow his own Will: Neither Small nor Great, none excepted, will resign their Will to God's, but will all depend upon their own. Is it a Wonder that I told you formerly, that no body could be saved after the way that Men live at present? This is an infallible Truth, which none has yet discovered because of the Universal Darkness that is at present in the World: Every one imagines that he will resign himself to God, while in the mean time there is no such thing: For if this were true, we should not see Men so forward to deal in Business, or Traffick, nor to run through Countries and Cities to heap up Mony, nor to use underhand Dealings for Offices, Places, or Benefices: For every one placing his Dependance upon God, would labour to provide only for his Necessities and no more, knowing well that this Life is short, and that Necessaries suffice a Traveller, who studies not to load himself with Things superfluous or useless for his Journey, for they would be a Burden to him. All the Cares, the Toils, the Pursuits of Men for present Things, are so many Evidences which declare that we will not resign our Will to God's, but that we will follow our own, neglecting the Penitence that God has enjoynd us, that we may be advanced to Places, Honours, or Dignities, seeking to live at our own Ease, instead of labouring to satisfy the Penitence due to our Sins: We Act quite contrary to the Will of God; for we cannot be ignorant that he demands of us this Submission, and this Penitence. And with all we say by Word, that we are resign'd to God, and we look on it as a thing impossible, that we should deny him our Will: Which still discovers the more our Blindness.

I said to her, *That there was truly a horrible Darkness through the whole World, and that I my self was surrounded with it, while I believ'd that I would be resign'd to God, and in the meantime had many Cares yet for this present Life.*

She

*She said:* Sir, You see that your Resignation is not true, so long as your Cares are yet for this Life. This would be a great distrust of God, if after you were resign'd to his Government, you should yet be careful for Temporal Things. Can God, who created all Things for Man, deny him his Necessities, when he shall be resign'd to him? It is *(b)* he feed the Birds of the Air who do not labour, shall he not feed Man when he labours? We are full of false Persuasions, which flatter us to our Ruine. For it is certain that he who has resolved to resign himself to God, seeks no longer for Earthly Things, but for those which are Eternal. God makes him see evidently, that what is here Below is nothing, but Transitory, which the Servant of God should not touch but by the by, for they are unworthy of a Soul dedicated to God, which cares no longer for any thing but to please him. And if you be careful for other Things, be assuredly perswaded that you are not yet resign'd to God: Because this Resignation consists in a cessation from all things to receive God only. And the less we Act our selves, the more we receive. There needs no more but **TO CEASE AND TO RECEIVE:** For all our Cares and Vexations, or Activities for the Things of this Life, are all Hindrances which stifle the Operations which God would make in our Soul. We must be quiet and rest, that we may suffer the Holy Spirit alone to Act. If our Will be resign'd to God, he will *(c)* govern it wisely. Let us leave our Souls to his Government, and labour to accomplish the Penitence due for our Sins, that we may have the Things needful for the Maintenance of our Body: And then we could truly say, that we are resign'd to God, and not before. For the Offices, Cares and Business of the World, are all Hindrances to this Resignation: And even the so many different Ways of Devotion that are now practised, are all great Hindrances; since nothing but this Resignation alone is necessary.

I said to her, That this little Word, Resignation, comprehended great Things; that nevertheless it was the Philosophers Stone for the Discovery of Eternal Treasures, to which I aspired.

*(b)* Mat. 6. 26. *(c)* Psal. 73. 23, 24.

*She said :* Sir, This Word, RESIGNATION TO GOD, comprehends (l) all Things : For he who is resign'd to him, knows him and loves him ; he knows also true Vertue that he may follow it, and the Falshood of Vices that he may avoid them : Because God gives himself to the Soul that is resign'd to him, and the Holy Spirit lives in it, and abiding in it, he replenishes it with his Gifts to know all Things, and with his Fruits to entertain it : So that all our Happinefs depends upon the resigning our Wills to God's, and not upon many different Things, as People imagine. That we may be restored into Favour with God, entirely converted to him, and out of all sort of danger, there needs nothing but this Resignation. If you are guilty (m), resign your self to God, he will immediately receive you ; and convert you to himself ; and if (n) you are afraid of his Judgments, and of these dangerous Times, resign your self to him, he will preserve and save you. There is nothing to be done but this only, *To resign our selves to God, and to continue in a Dependance upon Him.* Is it not a very Reasonable Thing that a Creature should abide in Dependance on its Creatour ? Must there be Constraints and Commands to oblige it to a Duty so just, so good, and advantagious ? There is no Law, Divine, Humane, nor Civil, that can give us a Dispensation from so just a Thing. Nevertheless, we Rebel against all sort of Rights to adhere to our own Will, which is so wicked and insolent, which precipitates us into so many sorts of Evils ; for all the Miseries which we feel in this Life, proceed from our Self-will : And as the Resignation of it to the Will of God (o) is the Accomplishment of all Good, so the Possession of it is the (p) Consummation of all sort of Evil : So that he who would be converted, needs only resign his own Will into God's Hands : In doing this he fulfils all the Law and the Prophets ; because they Teach us nothing else but the Means to attain to this Resignation.

I said to her, *That this being supposed, which was most true, That if we still acknowledge, that we depend upon God in all things, we have no need of any other Precept or Com-*

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(l) Psal. 73. 25, 26. (m) Luke 15. 18. (n) Psal. 18. 5, 7. (o) Psal. 37. 5, 7. (p) Isa. 65. 3.

*mand, it was strange that she had taught me so many Means.*

*She said :* Sir, I have told you of the State of the World, and of the Church, that you may no longer trust to them by a pious implicate Faith. I have told you also, that we are fallen into the Reign of Antichrist, fearing least you be deceived ; and also that the World is Judg'd, that you may not flatter your self with false Hopes, believing that it will last yet, and so continue in sloth. I have also shewn you true Vertue, that you be not deceived by that which is so but in appearance ; having also declared to you the Sins against the Holy Ghost, and those which we commit in another, that you may not be ignorant of any thing that can hinder this Resignation to God : For the Ignorance of Good and Evil would insensibly ruine us ; and whereas we are fallen into the Times of Universal Darknes, the Common Enemy might very easily deceive you, as he does all the World, perswading you that you are resign'd to God, when you live yet intirely to your self. Therefore I have explained to you so many Things one by one, that you might discern aright Truth from Lies ; and that you might certainly resign your self to God according to your desire. And because you can never do good without departing from Evil (q), nor depart from that without knowing it, I have therefore endeavoured to discover to you the Good and Evil that Reigns at present in the World, that I might give you the certain Marks whereby to know if you are truly resign'd to God, or not ; and since the Commandments of God, and also the Law of the Gospel, are given us to discover what hinders us to be resign'd to him : That by this means we may remove all the Hindrances of our Resignation to God : Voluntary Poverty serving as a Mean to free our Self-will from the desire of perishing Goods ; Chastity to free this Will from desiring Carnal Pleasures ; and Obedience to deliver us from the desire of fulfilling our own Will ; and so of all the other Evangelical Counsels which teach us to depart from that which hinders our Resignation to God : Therefore I judg'd it necessary to declare to you all the Things that hinder this Resignation to God, and

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(q) *Psalm*. 34. 15.



those also which may serve as Means to facilitate this Resignation, which is the only Essential Thing that God demands of all those who would be saved.

I asked her: *If it will be enough for me, absolutely to resolve that henceforth I will depend upon God, and no longer use my own Will in any thing.*

She said: This Resolution, Sir, is a great Beginning; but 'tis to be feared, that we shall not put it effectually in Execution, because of our inveterate Evil Habits. Our Self-will having always born sway, how can we entirely subdue it, except by the Means that Jesus Christ has pointed out to us in his Gospel, which are as so many Steps to ascend to this Resignation? For otherwise we might make false Suppositions, as we have done hitherto. But when we shall put in practise the Doctrine of the Gospel, we shall thereby discover, how far we have advanced in this Resignation to God: For if our Frailty had not needed these Means, God would not have taken Humane Flesh to come and teach us them: For he can do nothing that is useless. We must therefore fix here, Sir, and receive this Doctrine of the Gospel in its plain Literal Sense, which will teach us all things plainly to our Senses, by following of which we shall certainly attain to this Resignation: For this is the true, the shortest, and the most certain way. Though indeed God sent at divers times Prophets and holy Persons to tell Men by what Means they might recover this Resignation to God, yet none of them has done it so perfectly as Jesus Christ did when he was upon Earth: For he has omitted nothing, but has taught all so precisely, that Men will never stand in need of any other Instructions: For this is the last Mercy that God will shew to Men, who must not look for any thing after the Doctrine of Jesus Christ: And what was taught before or since, is not at all comparable to this Doctrine of the Gospel. If we would be sav'd, we must embrace and follow it; for it teaches us all the necessary Means for fulfilling the Law of God.

*Will it be enough for me, absolutely to resolve that henceforth I will depend upon God, and no longer use my own Will in any thing.*

(r) Jos. 58. 13.

The

## The Thirteenth Conference,

*Shews, That the Doctrine of Jesus Christ is the last that God will send into the World: And that the Holy Spirit comes to give now the perfect Understanding of it.*

I asked her, *How this Doctrine of the Gospel could be the last Means that God would give to Men to bring them to Salvation, since we look yet for the Holy Spirit, who in these last Times must teach us all Things?*

*She said: Sir, The Last Times began (s) when God became Man. He brought along with him upon Earth his Last Mercy, teaching Men by Word and Deed all that they ought to do and avoid, without omitting any thing of all that shall be necessary for them even to the End of the World: So that none have need of any thing else to be taught them. It is true, we shall have the Holy Spirit (r) in the End of these Last Times, into which we are now fallen; and he is already born upon Earth: But he comes not to bring us new Means of Salvation, but only (u) to lay before us those which Jesus Christ taught us when he was in the World, that we may clearly see (x) how far we are now estranged from them, and to give us the Light of Truth, that we may see the Way to return, and re-take the same Gospel-means, that we may recover the Dependence of our Will upon that of God, which is his First and Onely Essential Command, without which no Body can be saved: For this is the least Thing that we owe him; and if we do not fulfil it, our Ingratitude is so great, that we cannot in Justice be saved.*

*I asked her, If the Holy Spirit was born in Flesh, as Jesus Christ was in his Time? And what things he would teach us more than Jesus Christ has done?*

*She said: Sir, The Holy Spirit is the same (y) God*

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(s) Gal. 4. 4. I Cor. 10. 11. (r) John 6. 13. (u) John 14. 26. (x) John 16. 9. (y) I John 5. 7.

with Jesus Christ, (z) who was the Word of God, as the Holy Spirit (a) is his Understanding. There is but One God only, but there are divers Powers. And as our Understanding knows more than our Mouth speaks, so the Holy Spirit will give more Light (b) than did the Words of Jesus Christ, though all comes (c) from one and the same God, and one and the same Source. What Jesus Christ said was understood by Men only in part (d), and the same Things shall be understood in a perfect and compleat Sense by this Wisdom of the Holy Spirit. He needs not take a Body of Flesh to speak to Men: For Jesus Christ did that sufficiently; so that he needs speak no more: But there is need of more Understanding: For the Last Times are near their End: And before the World end, God will give the full Understanding of all that has been delivered in God's Name from the Beginning of the World, both by the Holy Prophets, and by Jesus Christ and his Apostles, or other Saints his Disciples. Nothing has been fully understood of all the Holy Scripture; for even they who pronounc'd it, understood it not in its perfect Sense, but in part only: But now that the Holy Spirit is come upon Earth to give the full Knowledge of them, he needs not for this End a Body of Flesh; but only to give Men Spiritual Understanding, that they may know the Powers of God, the Love he bears to Man, the End for which he created him, and may have the knowledge of True Verrue, and of that which is False. All these Things shall be known by the Understanding of those Men who will receive the Light of Truth which the Holy Spirit brings now into the World. HE IS BORN in the midit of its Universal Darknes, in which no Body knows the Truth of any Thing, all being falsified or not known. The Holy Spirit comes to clear this by Spiritual Notices.

*I blest my good Fortune, and the Day in which I met with this Pilgrimeß; for my Understanding received such Light by her Discourses, that I must confess my Soul had perish'd without this Rencontre: I asked her, How her Words could have such strong Operations on me?*

(z) John 1. 1. (a) 1 John 5. 20. compare 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11, 12. (b) John 16. 12, 13. (c) Job. 16. 14, 15. (d) 1 Cor. 13. 9.

*She said:* Sir, This proceeds from the Holy Spirit, who begins to visit your Soul by his Light. Receive it with Humility of Heart, and he will enlighten you more: For he is come to fill the Souls of all those who shall receive the Truth. It is by the Operations that you feel that he is born in Souls. He is a Spirit, and he works in the Spirit of all who seek and desire him. We must not (e) any longer seek for visible and material Means: For all these things are Hindrances to him. Let us only open our Heart and Spirit to receive the Truth, and it will teach us all Things: For nothing but Lies has undone the whole World. The Darknels that Men are in, and their forgetfulness of God, have come by Lying, which has seiz'd on all the World: For none are (f) now in the Truth: The false Perswasions which they have imprinted on Mens Hearts, have made them mistake God and the State of their own Souls. There is therefore great reason to bless the Goodness of God, who in so miserable a Time sends us his Holy Spirit to enlighten all those who will receive him. I believe, Sir, you are the first; but a great Number will follow you: For as soon as the delusion shall be discovered, the Eyes of many will be opened, and their Heads lifted up, to return to God, abhorring their Errours, and the Deceit of their blind Guides. They will see, that all that they have taught them as Means of bringing them to God, have estrang'd them from him; and the Sacraments and other Ceremonies of the Church, instead of procuring them the Grace of God to love him and to acquire true Vertue, have given them rather a Contempt of God, and a false hypocritical Vertue. This being discovered, (g) many will seek the Truth, abhorring Lying, which has put their Salvation in so great hazard.

I asked her, *If the Holy Spirit would not become visible?*

*She said:* No, Sir; He will not be visible, but by the Operations which he will make in Souls whom you shall see disingaged from the Earth, and cleaving to God alone. We shall see them possess Joy, Peace, and Patience, with the other Fruits and Gifts, which will be sure Evidences that the Holy Spirit will dwell in their Souls, who not-

(e) *John* 4. 21-24. (f) *Hof.* 4. 1. (g) *Hof.* 6. 1.



withstanding shall not be seen by the Eyes of the Body in any Material Form or Figure: For the Time is come that (b) God will be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth, and no longer in Figures, which shall all cease because of the Accomplishment of all Things: And all that was figured in the Old Law shall be accomplished in full perfection by the Holy Spirit: For the Time is come, that all the Promises which God made to Men from the Beginning of the World shall be fulfilled, the Alliance that God (i) has promis'd to make with Men shall have its perfect Accomplishment: For they shall be his People, and he will be their God. This has not come to pass as yet. Though Men were created to be God's People, nevertheless they did not continue so; on the contrary, they committed to many Infidelities, that he was oblig'd to destroy them by a General Deluge; and though the Children of Israel were God's peculiar People, they forsook him notwithstanding, and gave themselves to Idolatry. The Jews who were as precisely God's People, denied him also, and would not acknowledge him when he became Man, but revild him and hang'd him on a Cross. And now the Christians, who ought more perfectly to be God's People, despise him in his Sufferings, and in his Doctrine. So that the Alliance that God promis'd to make with Man, could not hitherto be accomplish'd. Of necessity the Holy Spirit must come upon Earth to enlighten Men, that they may have the Faithfulness requisite for this Alliance of God with Men: For a Marriage cannot be compleat if the Spouse be not faithful as the Husband is.

(b) 1 John 4. 24. (i) Jer. 32. 40.

The

## The Fourteenth Conference,

*Speaks of the Alliance that God will make with Men, and of the Coming of Jesus Christ in Glory; and that to have a Share in it, we must of necessity resign our Will to God, and return to a Dependance upon him.*

I entreated her to tell me, *How, and when, and wherein, this Alliance of God with Men shall be made?*

She said: This Will be made by the Holy Spirit, who will illuminate Souls, make them know their Errours, and also the End for which they were created, which is nothing less, than to be joyn'd and united to God, who will take his Delight with Men (k): And they perceiving this, shall separate themselves from all Earthly Pretensions, and resign themselves to the Will of God, desiring no longer to use their own Wills, because they have entirely renounc'd them. Then shall they (l) have such Dispositions as will invite God down to the Earth, to Ally himself visibly and bodily with Men by an inseparable and indissoluble Tie. This is the End for which God cloath'd himself with a Humane Body, to make himself like to Man, that the Alliance he designed to make with him might be wholly perfect and complear, both in Body and Spirit. What God promis'd (m) of Old to Abraham, could never be accomplish'd; because Men were never resign'd to God as they ought, having still us'd their own Free-will, without depending upon God. This did separate and divorce them from the Alliance which he promis'd them. But in this Fulness of Time, wherein we live, the Holy Spirit is come down to teach us, all Things; and whosoever shall hear him, shall enjoy the promis'd Alliance: For (n) Jesus Christ will come very shortly upon the Earth in

(k) Prov. 8. 31. (l) Isa. 58. 11-14. (m) Gen. 17. 7.  
(n) Rev. 22. 12.

Glory, to Joyn and Allie himself with all those who shall resign themselves to him. I cannot precisely tell the Day, Sir; but that it will be towards the End of the Plagues, which are now begun. But I can assure you that it shall be here, upon Earth <sup>(o)</sup>, where God with Men shall enjoy a perfect Contentment, which shall be <sup>(p)</sup> Eternal: For the Presence of God made Man will unite them with such a perfect Love, that they can never again depart from him, though they shall still preserve their Free-will.

*I felt in my Soul great Consolation in hearing her speak of the Alliance that God would make with Man, and ask'd, What I should do to attain to such a Happiness?*

*She said:* Sir, You have nothing else to do for attaining to an Alliance with God, but to <sup>(q)</sup> resign your own Will to him, that he may dispose of it. This is the One Thing needful. So soon as you shall depend upon him in all things, you shall be betroth'd in order to the promis'd Alliance, and therein you shall find such Consolations as I cannot express to you. You shall then be as sure of this promis'd Alliance, as at least a Maid is to marry her Betroth'd, or a Man her whom he has Betroth'd, and much more: For the Promises of Men may be diverted by divers Accidents; but those of God are immutable, and will never change. So soon as Man resigns himself to him, he receives him <sup>(r)</sup>, and treats with him as if he had never offended him, how great a Sinner soever he may have been. A Man must be void of Judgment, and very unthankful for such a Goodness of God, when he will not depend upon his Creatour, from whom he has received all Things, and who in requital of so many Benefits, demands nothing else but to acknowledge, that all he has comes from him? If he did this, he might lawfully enjoy all Things according to his Wish. Could God do more to Man than to let him rule over all Things, provided only that he would always acknowledge the Dependance that he had upon his God? And on the contrary, Could Man commit a greater Ingratitude than not to depend upon God, who created him, who preserves him, and from whom alone he can expect Salvation? We must have

(o) Rev. 5. 10. (p) Rev. 7. 15, 16, 17. (q) Prov. 23. 26.  
(r) Ezek 33. 12. 16.

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lost our Wits, and become cruel to our selves, if we deprive our selves of so great a Happiness, only that we may enjoy our Free-will, which often precipitates us into diverse kinds of Evils, that are sometimes irreparable: Because he who follows his own Will can never be saved, and the Mischief we sustain by Damnation can never be repair'd (s).

I said to her, *Never any had taken notice of so precise a Necessity of depending in every thing upon God for Salvation; but they thought that whosoever died not in a mortal Sin was sav'd.*

*She said:* Sir, This Ignorance, not to know that we ought to depend upon God in all Things, is the Cause of the Ruine of all Men: Every one imagining that nothing else is necessary for Salvation but to abstain outwardly from evil Actions: This God did not declare to *Adam* when he created him for Salvation, but he expressly testified to him that he ought always to depend upon him, and acquiesce in his Will. What God did to *Adam*, he did in him to all Mankind. Therefore it is much better to hold to the First Commandment of God, than to amuse our selves with the Opinions of Men, who with their Studies and Notions give assurance of Salvation without any Ground. For all that they call *Mortal or Venial Sins*, are nothing else but the Hindrances which we make to this Resignation to God. Except this, there can be no Sin: For if this Resignation be not hindred, we are certainly saved: For Resignation in its self is Salvation. This we cannot observe, because so many other different Things are set before us to hinder the Knowledge of this Eternal Truth, to wit, *That God has never demanded, and never will demand in Time coming, any thing else of Man, but the Resignation of his Will to the Will of God.* And when it is said, *Thou shalt not kill, steal, nor commit fornication, or other Evils*, it is as much as to say in one Word, *Thou shalt not follow thy own Will, but that of God:* For the abstaining from all these Evils, is nothing else but the leaving off to follow our own Will, which incites us to do these Evils: For as soon as we shall resign it to the Will of God, he will lead us to all sort of Good: And

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(s) *Mark 8. 36, 37.*



these Evils are particularly forbidden us, that we may thereby perceive when we are not resign'd to God : For this Resignation delivers us from all sorts of Evil, and by following our own Will we do certainly commit them. I wish all the World did comprehend this Truth, *That no Body can ever sin but in following his own Will, and no Body can ever be saved but by resigning his Will to the Will of God.*

I said to her, *It was most true, That to be sav'd we must resign our Will to that of God ; and that it was a loss that was not taught to all Christians.*

She said: Sir, The Devil has now such Power over the Minds of Men, that he leads them wholly at his Will, and has razed out of their Memories the one thing needful, which is to resign their own Will to that of God : And that they may be insensible of this Forgetfulness, he has invented so many Means of Salvation, that no Body thinks of it, nor believes it necessary to resign his Will to that of God, imagining that it is enough for Salvation to go to Church, to frequent the Sacraments, and to get Indulgencies. This Blindness ruins all good Men : For none can any longer perceive that this Resignation is necessary ; and not perceiving it, they do not believe it. For this cause No body sets about it : For we see now the best Men are addicted to follow their own Wills in every thing, even in Eating and Drinking, and Walking ; And generally all they do is regulated by their own Wills ; even their Vertues and Devotions are manag'd by their Self-will : And in the mean time they think they are in the way of Salvation : As if God had need of our Sacrifices, or our Prayers ; while he will have nothing else but the Resignation of our Wills to his Will. This no Body strives to do : On the contrary, every one, both Small and Great, of whatsoever Condition, follow their own Will. Christians do even train up their Children in the Habit of following their own Wills, In which they bring them up to their Damnation : Because being habituated from their Childhood to follow their own Wills, when they are grown up they can very hardly part with them ; and thus every one perishes without perceiving it. And he who declares these Truths, is oppos'd by all those who are infected with this Vice, who have no mind to part with it, perswading themselves without ground, that

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this Resignation is not necessary : Though it be most true that God demands nothing else of us ; For he has no need at all of our Works, nor of our Words, nor Riches, nor Honour, nor any Created Thing, because he contains all in himself : But he has chosen our Will for himself, that it being united to his own, he might take his delight and pleasure in it. Consider a little, Sir, how far we stray from the Designs of God, while we thus use our own Will in all Things, without discovering the Wiles of Satan, who under good and pious pretences leads us at his pleasure from a Dependence upon God, and yet we do not perceive it.

I said to her, *That it was an Infatuation of Spirit, that no Body saw precisely the necessity of this Dependence, but they imagin'd it was enough to believe in the general, that God is our Creatour, and that we have receiv'd all from him.*

*She said : Sir, Faith without Works (†) is dead. It is not enough that we believe by way of Speculation, That we have received all from God ; but on the contrary, this belief will render us more guilty : For to believe that God is our Creatour, and that all Things appertain to him, and notwithstanding of this Belief, to desire to rule upon Earth as Sovereigns of our own Will, and not to submit it but by constraint to all that God permits to befall us against our own Inclinations, this is directly opposite to our Belief, and so is it to believe also that we received all that we have from God, and nevertheless to use all these things according to our Appetites and Inclinations, as all the World does. For he who has received a good Judgment, applies it to acquire Sciences, Offices, or Dignities in this World, forgetting that this Judgment pertains not to him, but God only gave it him that it might be applied to know and love him ; and if he apply it to any thing else, he must render a strict account of it. Nevertheless, no Body considers this : Every one thinks he is Master and Lord of his own Understanding, and may dispose of it independently according to his own Will. It is the same also with him who has Wealth ; he makes himself Lord and Master of it, even as if it belong'd to him in property. He employs it in Glory, Pomp, and Vanity, or other*

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(†) *Jam. 2. 26.*

Pleasures, of his Body or Mind, or in the Things to which he finds himself most inclin'd, as if he had created these Riches himself, and held them of none; and while he says by Word, that he has received all from God, yet notwithstanding he will not use them but according to his own Will : And thus by his Deeds (*u*) he believeth what he sayeth by Word : Thinking to deceive God he deceives himself, and is his own Ruine : For while we will use our own Will in all things, we withdraw from a Dependence upon God, which is so necessary for our Salvation.

## The Fifteenth Conference,

*Shews, how every thing must be used to keep us in a Dependence upon God.*

I asked her, *How every thing ought to be used, that we may have this entire Dependence upon God ?*

*She said :* Sir, We must first consider for what End we were Created : And seeing that it was to Love and Serve God, : we must apply our selves to nothing else, except by the by in necessary Things, reserving all our Affections for him who Created us for these Ends : And whether we have Wit, or other Talents of Body or Mind, or Riches, Honours, and Prosperity, we must never use these Things but for the Glory of God : Because all pertains to him, and we are but the Stewards of them, liable to give an Account : And we ought to manage them so well, that nothing may be used but by the Appointment and Will of God, which we ought always to inquire into and follow, and never our own Will ; for it ought still to depend upon him who gave it. Could God demand less of us than the Dependence of our Will on his, after he had given us our Body with all its Properties ; and our Soul with all its Faculties ; and this Beautiful World, with all that is in it,

(*u*) Tit. 1: 16.

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to enjoy them fully at our Wish, with Joy and Ease, demanding nothing else for so many Gifts, Graces, and Privileges, but the Resigning of our Wills to his, notwithstanding of which, Man is so ungrateful, unthankful and unreasonable, as to deny it to his God, his Creatour? This Dependance of our Will, so small a Gift that God asks of us, should it be refus'd him, when we know that all comes from him, and that his Goodness has so advantageously bestowed Favours on us? Truly, Sir, this Ingratitude deserves that all the Creatures rise up against Man, to take Vengeance of the Injury he has done his Creatour, in denying him the Dependance of his Free-will, and that he will dispose of it himself. Even insensible Things are obliged by strict Justice to avenge such an Ingratitude. Which will be very speedily done: Because the Measure is full. All Men harden their Hearts, and stop their Ears against Gods Demand, *Of resigning their Wills to his Will*: None will hearken to it any longer. Therefore the Sentence of Universal Rods is given out, and shall not be revoked: Because none will revoke the Resolution that every one has taken of following their own Will in every thing, and will not depend upon God, as if we were our own Sovereigns.

I said to her, *There were yet some Persons in the World whose Wills were resign'd to that of God.*

*She said*: Sir, I know none of them: But I do not know all the World. If there be some yet scattered up and down the World, God will take them into his particular Care: But the General Judgment shall not be delayed for this: The Plagues shall encrease still, even till the Consummation of all Evil; and if they go on leisurely, it is to give Time and Leisure to Men of Good Will (w) that they may be converted and repent of their Ingratitude, yielding up (x) to God the Free-will that he so freely gave them, to use it according to his Will. This is now done by few or none. We hear nothing else said, but, *I will be resign'd to God*, while in effect all the World follow their own Will. Some give themselves eagerly to Study, some to Trade, some to the Law, to Offices, Benefices, and that unceasingly, till every one has obtained their Pretensions:

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(w) 2 Pet. 3. 9. (x) Psal. 31. 6.



And we settle our selves upon Earth as an abiding City, or as if we were created for this Miserable Life, here we build Tabernacles as if we were to remain in them always (y), while we see our Friends and Neighbours dye in a little time; and we know that none stays here, but every one dyes in his turn, some sooner, and some later, without knowing at what Hour our turn will come. We are born in Miseries, in which we live and dye; without seeing any other End for our selves but Death, which may make us sufficiently comprehend that we are not created for this Life; but we must look for another: For God could never have had so low an End in creating us as the the Miseries of this present Life, because in this he should have done an ill thing: Which (z) God can never do, seeing he is the Source of all Good, from whom no Evil can proceed. But our Self-will alone engenders all the Evils and Miseries that we suffer: For he who beats his Brains in Study, suffers for the Self-will or Inclination he has for Studies all the Inconveniences that are in this Employment: For God never demanded (a) Learning of any Body, though Men cover this with the Pretext of the Glory of God, yet there is nothing in it for the most part but Curiosity and Vain-glory, or some Designs of making some Fortune in this World. Another by his Self-will gives himself to Traffick, or the business of Merchandising, and will therefore endure Cares, Watchings, Fatigues, and Labours, to get a Little Heap of Mony, or other Temporal Goods, which end with him, because he leaves them on the Earth, from whence he took them. One will be a Priest, or a Monk; another will Marry, or continue free: In one Word, All Men in the World study to follow their own Wills in every thing, without being willing to yield them to God, and notwithstanding, we think to go to Paradise while we refuse to resign our Will to him, which we ought to do, though he had never required it of Man: It should be offered him in Acknowledgment of so many Benefits received from our God.

I asked her, *If it was not lawful for every one to choose some State or Calling by which to gain his Bread?*

(y) *Psal.* 49. 12--15. (z) *Wisd.* 1. 13, 14. (a) *Eccl.* 12. 12. *Luke* 12. 11, 12.

*She said:* Yes, Sir, It is expedient that every one Labour, that he may have his Bread; for God has appointed Labour in Penitence for our Sins: It is a Holy and Sacred Thing to Labour, that we may fulfil the Penitence that God himself has enjoyn'd us. We are free also to choose some State; that of Marriage is instituted by God; but a free (b) Condition gives more leisure for converse with God, and to work out our Salvation, delivering us from the Cares and Vexations of the Government and Maintenance of a Family, which do often breed us many Distractions: But to choose humane Offices according to our Will, would prove great Hindrances to us, and are available only for this Life, which needs (c) but a little Food, and some Clothing to cover our Body, all the rest is superfluous, and a Burden to him that would obey God. Therefore all Places, Offices, or Benefices, of what kind soever, are great Hindrances to Salvation, because they respect only the Earth, and aim at nothing but the Wealth, Honours, or Pleasures of this World, which Things do certainly withdraw us from God (d), and even make us often wholly to forget him by the continual Employments, and Diversions which these Places, Offices, or Benefices, bring along with them, which are not only undertaken, by all means sought after, and desired, that thereby we may gain our Bread; but very often that we may be rais'd to Honour and Vanities, or that we may take with more Ease the Delights of the Body or of the Mind, or also that we may heap up Temporal Wealth: All which Things do certainly withdraw us from God. Nevertheless we see Christians now adays do Toil, and Sweat, and Labour to obtain some Place, Office, or Benefice; and they study all their Life-time to pursue what is pleasant, profitable, or honourable for them; and they believe they are Wise in so doing: As if their Happiness did depend upon this present Life, and it were needful to make some Fortune here. Which is a great Blindness of Mind.

I asked her, *If all Places, Offices, or Benefices, were evil, since it seem'd necessary and expedient that there should be Judges to maintain Order among the People; and also Priests, to teach what concerns Salvation?*

(b) 1 Cor. 7. 32, 34. (c) 1 Tim. 6. 8. (d) 1 Job. 2. 15.

*She said:* Sir, All Places, Offices, or Benefices, are good in themselves ; but the ill use that is made of them, renders them evil. If a Person should engage in any Office of Justice, or any other Secular Station, singly with a design to Labour to preserve the People in Peace, and to maintain Justice, and the Innocence of those whom others would wrong, this would be a great Charity to his Neighbour, and a great Merit and Satisfaction as to the Penitence that every one is oblig'd to accomplish during this Miserable Life : Because in taking the Cares and Labour of the Mind for a Pennance, we satisfy God in gaining our Bread by these Labours of the Mind ; and besides this, we assist our Neighbour by good Counsel, and by maintaining him in his Right, and defending him against malicious Persons. He to whom God has given the Spirit and Capacity of doing this, will be doubly recompensed before God, provided he do it in a Spirit of *Penitence* in respect of himself, and of *Charity* in respect of his Neighbour. But it is much to be regretted, that Men now regard neither of these Ends : For if they could enjoy a good Pension due to any Office with little Travel, this is what they would love most : They seek not the Toils of it, but the Profits : Nor the maintaining of Policy, or Justice, but the Honour of Ruling over the People ; and if it were only the Zeal of Policy and Justice that moved Men to engage into publick Offices, no good Men could stay in them any longer in these unhappy Times, wherein Policy, and Justice, is no longer observed. The Laws of Government are all made for the burthen of the Common People, and for the Ease and Relief of the Great Men, and those in Authority : And by the same Breath Justice is turn'd in their Favour. So that Offices, good in themselves, are become very evil, by the bad use which Men make of them now, who obey not in any thing the Ordinances of God, which are *Penitence*, and *Charity* to our Neighbour. But on the quite contrary, they will enjoy (e) instead of suffering ; and take their Pleasure and Repose, instead of doing Penitence. If Merchants had the Spirit of Penitence, and Traded on design to procure Work to such Neighbours as were more fit for going about

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(e) *Isa.* 22. 12, 13.

some Trade or Handicraft than to Labour the Ground, all this would be done in mutual Charity, accomplishing their Penitence; the one by working, and the other by taking care to send their Merchandises to the Places where they might be Retailled: But the Intentions of these Men are far from the Designs of God: For instead of Trading singly for their necessary Maintenance, they do it only to enrich themselves, and to encrease their Glory and Vanity: So that instead of satisfying God by the Penitence of the Labours and Travels of our Business, by undergoing them we but encrease our Sins; and instead of exercising Charity to our Neighbour in giving him Wages for his Entertainment, People take their greatest Advantages from the Workman, and they give him as little as they can for his Labour. And thus we do not accomplish Penitence, nor yet exercise Charity to our Neighbour; but we Toil and Labour for the Goods of this Miserable Life as if we were Created for it, though we ought only to pass through it as Travellers (*f*) and Pilgrims. But we change all the Orders that God has established; and instead of fighting here in the Spirit of Penitence, we desire to Rule at our Pleasure; and instead of loving our Neighbour as our selves, we deny him sometimes Wages for his Labour, that we may enrich our selves the more, seeking nothing but our own Interest, without regarding the Loss or Inconveniency of our Neighbour: A certain Evidence that Charity is dead among Christians, even among Churchmen, who as the Fathers of Christians, and the Pastours of their Souls, should undertake Offices and Benefices out of pure Charity, (*g*) to Teach the Ignorant in the matter of their Salvation, and also to accomplish their own Penitence, in Labouring and Travelling to gain Souls to God, as the Apostles did. But instead of doing this, they seek after the Benefices that have the greatest Revenues, and the least Toil; and instead of Labouring in the Lord's Vineyard, they seek their Rest and Ease, doing as little Penitence as they can to satisfy God, as every one is obliged to do for himself: For there is neither Priest, Religious, Pope, Cardinal, Bishop, Prebend, nor any other, of whatsoever State or Condition,

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(*f*) 1 Pet. 2. 11. (*g*) 1 Pet. 5. 1, &c.



who is not oblig'd to accomplish his Penitence here: For all having fallen in *Adam*, are subject to the Penitence that was enjoyned him, which ought to be known by all Men. The Saints did always Labour; Jesus Christ himself did so (*b*): His Apostles and Disciples never gave themselves Ease while they lived in this Life of Penitence. For that great Bishop and Father of Christians, the Apostle St. *Paul* says, (*i*) that he was never chargeable to any, but gained his Bread by working with his own Hands, besides the Travels and Labours which he did undergo (*k*) to Teach the ignorant the Doctrine of the Gospel, performing thus (*l*) his Penitence by his Labour, for his own Sins, and exercising Charity to his Neighbour by the Sweat and Labour of Troublesome Voyages. Consider, Sir, how far Men are now from observing the Ordinances of God? How every one strives to resist them. For neither Small nor Great submits to Labour to perform his Penitence, but all willingly Labour to gain Money, or to take their Pleasures, or to make themselves be Honoured in this Miserable World; regarding more those Things which pass away, than those which are Eternal, or to say better, regarding and obeying more our own Will than the Will and Ordinances of God. Is it a Wonder if such Sins draw down the Vengeance of God upon our guilty Heads, since no Body will undergo the Penitence that God has enjoyned to all Mankind; but every one will needs follow his own Will, and Labour to make himself happy in this Miserable Life, which was given us to do Penitence in, and not to take our Pleasures in it? If so many Miseries beset Men for one only Disobedience that *Adam* committed, what ought we to expect for so many Crimes and Contempts of the Ordinances of God, which we commit daily? We are astonish'd to see the Beginnings of Sorrows by Wars, and also Disorders and Confusions in States, and in the whole World; and we ought rather to be astonish'd at the Goodness of God, that he endures so long the Rebellion of his Creature Man, who is come to such a height of Ingratitude that he will no longer acknowledge, in any thing, the Dependance that he has

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(b) *Mark* 6. 3. (i) *1 Thess.* 2. 9. (k) *2 Cor.* 11. 23. &c. (l) *Col.* 1. 24.

upon his Creatour, but will Enjoy here where he ought to Suffer, and take his Pleasures where he ought to do Pennance: And yet nevertheless, dare lift up his Head, and believe that he shall have Eternal Life, notwithstanding of his Ingratitude, and his Disobedience to him who alone can save him! We would make God to become unjust, if we could: For we will not at all depend upon him, but upon our own Will: Neither will we suffer and do Pennance in this World, but rather Enjoy and Reign in it: And notwithstanding of all these Oppositions to God, we would oblige him to save us! Which would be against his Righteousness: Because Salvation belongs only to those who resign their Wills to that of God, and who do and fulfil the Pennance that God himself has enjoined us. Which no Body does: And all the World say, That they shall be Saved. In which every one deceives himself: For God will still exercise his Exact Righteousness without respect of Persons: He cannot save those who are not Resigned to his Will, no more than those who will not fulfil here the Pennance which Sin has merited: Because he will still accomplish his perfect Righteousness: Therefore Jesus Christ says, (m), *Not every one that sayes, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he who shall do the Will of my Father*; which is no other, but that Man of his own Free-will subject his Will to Gods Disposal, who having ordain'd him to gain his Bread by the Sweat of his Face, will never change his Ordinances: For he is unchangeable: And if Man withdraw himself from him, God in Reason and by an Upright Judgment will reject him; since Man has no Right to deny this Dependance upon his God: from whom he has received all Things, and himself.

I asked her, *Whether our Salvation depended only upon this Resignation of our Will to that of God?*

She said: Yes, Sir, our Salvation (n) depends solely on this Resignation of our Will to that of God: For it comprehends all the Laws, and all sort of Vertues: Because having resigned our Will to the Will of God, we live no (a) longer, but God lives in us, who works all his Will without opposition. He Acts in us; He Labours in us,

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(m) Mat. 7. 21. (n) Psal. 31. 6. (o) Gal. 2. 20.

and satisfies (p) our Penitence : So that the Soul has nothing more to do, but to receive from God, and delight its self in the Operations which he works in it (q) ; and needs not any longer seek for means of its Salvation without its self, for it possesses the Giver thereof. The Soul that is resigned to the Will of God, does possess all sort of Vertues, since God is pleased still to exercise his Goodness, and to give his Graces where he finds no longer any opposition. He Adorns the Soul with all sort of Vertues, which he Infuses in it with all the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit : So that the Soul which is Resign'd to God, has no longer need of any Laws, or Rules, or Means ; because God does govern the same immediately and independently from all Things. To this Dependance only our Salvation is annex'd, without which we cannot obtain it : Because this is the only Thing that God demands of Man, and he will never demand any other thing to make him eternally happy, neither shall he ever obtain Salvation without this Dependance : Because he who denies it to God, is rebellious and unthankful, while he will not depend upon him from whom he holds all that he has. If he dye in this Ingratitude, he must by straight Justice go to Hell, since he denies God a Thing which is so lawfully due to him, as the Dependance of a Creature upon its Creatour. Nothing can ever be demanded that is more equitable, and nothing can be more damnable than to use our Free-will in prejudice of the Designs that God had, in creating Man Ruler over all, provided he acknowledged his Dependance upon the Will of God. And as *Adam* lost himself by quitting this Dependance, so all Men ruine themselves who do not submit their Will to that of God : Because their Salvation depends on doing this, and not on many other things which they teach us as necessary to Salvrtion : All which cannot save us without this Dependance : For his Law cannot save us, nor all our Devotions and Means, unless they bring us to this Dependance of our Wills on the Will of God : All other Things put together cannot save us.

I said to her, *That Men were very blind in this Matter, and very far out of the True Way : For they do not suppose,*

(p) *Rom.* 8. 26. (q) *Heb.* 13. 21.

*That we must have our Will resigned to God thus independently from our own; but that to be saved it is enough to acknowledge, That God is Sovereign over all, and that also we keep his Commandments.*

*She said:* Sir, I greatly pity the Blindness of Men: Because they go astray under false Suppositions of their Salvation. This is Faith to believe that God is the Sovereign of all Things: But this Faith is not sufficient for Salvation! It must be (r) accompanied with the Works of Faith, that according to our Belief, we may give to God the sovereign and absolute Dominion of our Will, and that he may thereby operate his Will in us. This Resignation is the Work of our Faith: Without this Work we have only a dead Faith, which cannot save us, but would serve for our greater Condemnation: For (s), *He who knew his Masters Will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.* To know that God is the Sovereign of all Things, and not to yield up our Will to be governed by him, is worse than not to know his Sovereignty: Because this Faith and Belief obliges us to resign our selves wholly to him; whereas the Ignorance of this Faith might in some manner excuse us, for a time, because we are obliged to search and find out all things necessary for our Salvation: If we be ignorant of them at one time, we must study to learn them at another: For Ignorance does not excuse Sin. God has given us an Understanding for no other End but to Know and Love him, and to know what is necessary for Salvation. If we apply it to other Things we are deceived and amused by the Enemy, who is well pleased to divert our Understandings to Earthly Things, that we may perish through Ignorance, or by the Straying of our Minds. He who thinks to be saved because he has not Killed, Stolen, nor committed the other Sins contained in the Decalogue, is greatly deceived: For these things are not (t) spoken but for Malefactors, who quitted a Dependance upon God to follow their own Wills, in doing which they fell into all the Sins contained in the Ten Commandments: Which moved the Goodness of God to give them this Decalogue, that they might

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(r) *Jam.* 2. 22, 24, 26. (s) *Luke* 12. 47. (t) *1 Tim.* 1. 9, 10.



discover their Sins, and abstain from them in Time coming. For before these Sins God never gave any other Law to Man but this of resigning his Will to the Will of God: So that he who should abstain from committing the Sins contained in the Decalogue, should not be saved if withal he did not resign his own Will to that of God: because it is not enough to depart from Evil; we must also do Good; and having no Good but what comes from God, of necessity, that we may do Good, we must be resigned to him, because our own Will leads us always to Evil. By which it appears clearly, that the Resignation of our Will to that of God is the only Mean of our Salvation; and that no Body shall ever obtain it by any other way than by this Resignation of Will to God.

*I said to her, That this being so, it had been desirable, that never any thing else had been Taught Men: And that so many other Precepts and Means had made them hope for Salvation without Ground.*

*She said:* It is true, Sir, It had been better never to have been instructed in any thing else but in the Obligation we have to resign our Will to that of God. This was purely true, and Man could not fall into any Errour by this Doctrine; but it was also very good, that after we had quitted our Dependance God gave us the Ten Commandments, that by their Means we might know our Faults, without the knowledge of which we might have perished through Ignorance, as every one does now by being ignorant That to be saved our Will must depend upon God. For every one uses his own Will at his pleasure, without considering, that in doing this he cannot be saved. Even so they went on in all the sorts of Sins contained in the Ten Commandments, and in the meantime believed they were resigned to God, as we now believe we are, while we follow our own Will. These Commandments were necessary Means to make us return to a Dependance upon God: For all those Sins do hinder this Dependance, and do oppose the Works which God works in us. They must be removed before God have the Dominion of our Souls, and ere he can govern them according to his Will: Even so we must deny our own Will, if we would obtain Salvation: For it is still opposed to the Will of God, doing its Works either at the Will of the Devil, or else according to our natural Inclinations.

clinations. Which cannot be but evil. If they had only taught the Commands of God as necessary Means to be resigned to him, this had been a desirable Thing: For by showing that whosoever is resigned to God, does not Kill, nor Steal, nor do any thing contrary to the Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth of God, they would discover to all those who did commit such Things that they forsook their Dependence upon God, and followed their own Wills; that the knowledge of this might make them return to God, whom they had forsaken. But many other Means which they have taught as necessary for Salvation, prove rather Means to hinder it: Because many outward Devotions, the Ornaments of Churches, Images, Beads, a great many Books and Prayers, with a Thousand other Practices which neither God nor Jesus Christ taught, prove great Hindrances of the Resignation of our Will to that of God: For instead of having our Spirit free to let God Act in it what he shall find meet, we fill it with our own Affections, and keep our Will fixt to some Image, Prayer, or Devotion, which pleases our Humour. And thus our Soul not being empty, God cannot fill it. Thus we live and dye in amusing our selves with the Hopes of Salvation without any ground: Because it ought to be founded only upon the Resignation of our Will to that of God. That which we least think of is the most necessary.

I said to her, *Since this Resignation of our Will was the only thing needful, we ought to fix upon it, and that neither Books, nor Study, nor any other Means were any longer fit for attaining to Salvation; and that Man was very void of Judgment in burthening himself with so many other things.*

*She said: Sir, Man is truly void of Judgment, while he amuses himself with so many different Things, since there is but one thing necessary (u). All the rest is superfluous, and useless. There is no need of Studies, nor Benefices, that we may resign our selves to God, nor of Honours, nor Riches, nor Places and Dignities: For all this respects the Earth only and Humane Accommodations. A little Aliment will serve for this short Life. Alas! why should we vex and amuse our selves to make up a Fortune here,*

(u) *Luke 10. 42.*

which must remain on the Earth, and all Humane Delights must dye with us! Is it not a great Folly to embroil our selves in Places, Offices, and Benefices, for so short a Time as this Life lasts, during which we have no need of any thing, but a little Meat and Drink, with some Cloaths to cover our Body. No Body has need of any thing else, neither King nor Pope, more than others, with all their Wealth and Grandeurs, but this little Aliment; and whether we leave behind us at death Land or Money, 'tis all the same thing. The Body rots in the Ground, and we carry nothing away, the Rich no more than the Poor, the Noble than the Beggar. Death levels all without any Preference. Must not a Man be very void of Judgment to desire Goods which are a Burthen to us, painful to get, troublesome to preserve, and grievous to be parted with? What a folly does he commit who from his Youth gives himself to the Study of Letters, or other Sciences, on design to attain to some Office and Dignity, and when he has attain'd it, reckons himself happy? As if any Happiness could be found in Miseries! And does not discover that truly the Wealthiest and the Greatest are the most miserable, and subject to more Cares and Vexations, to more Fatigues, and greater Accounts to be charged on their Souls and Consciences: For he who has but a small Labour sufficient for the maintenance of his Life, without pretending to more, is a thousand times happier than a Rich and Great Man in this World, and has also a far less Account to render to God: For Offices and Riches lay great Obligations on him that possesses them: So that what we imagine to be a Happiness, brings upon us great Mischief, robbing us of our Time, which ought to be employed only in fulfilling our Penitence, and also exposing our Souls to many Hazards of their Salvation; and it wholly hinders the Resignation of our Will to that of God. For he who covets the Offices, Honours, Riches and Grandeurs of this World, (x) cannot be resigned to God, because all these things proceed from our own Will, seeing that of God aims at no other thing but Eternity, whereas all that is Temporal and passes away, is opposite to it. We would laugh to see a Pilgrim heap on his Head

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(x) 1 John 2. 15,

or Shoulders the Earth which he should only tread upon, that he may advance in his Journey; and we think we are very wise in Loading our selves with Gold and Silver, which should only serve us for a Foot-stool, and we oppress our Understanding with Cares, Studies and so many different Distractions; whereas we have but one thing only to care for, which is to resign our VVill to that of God, and (y) to live without Care in this Resignation of our Will to his. This is all that God will always demand of Man, without obliging him to any other Thing: And when we amuse our selves with so many different Things, we Act against the Command of God, and we follow our own Will. For one will covet to become an Attorney, Advocate, or Counsellour; another to be a Merchant, Shop-keeper, or Tradesman; one becomes a Priest, another enters into a Religious Order; another desires to be a Prebend, Bishop, Cardinal, or Pope: And when they have attain'd to all these Pretensions, they are only filled with Wind: Because all this passes away, (z) as the Vapour that vanishes in the Air: And very often when we think to take our ease under the Favour of some great Fortune, we immediately go down into the Grave, where Death puts an End to all our Employes, and renders all our Pretensions vain: For by following our own Will, we can never have acquired any thing for Heaven; and God would nor be just if he should reward eternally the Works that we do for the Earth, or with respect to the Creatures. We are deceived if we believe it; because all that respects the Earth is recompensed on the Earth.

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(y) *Matth.* 6. 25, &c. (z) *Psal.* 146. 3, 4. *John* 2. 17.

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## The Sixteenth Conference,

*Shews, How the Resignation of our Will to that of God, is a Continual Prayer ; that it supplies all particular Doctrines and Practices ; and that the Gospel directs us only to the removal of the Obstacles which hinder it, the discovery of which is necessary.*

I asked her, *If it was needful to use any longer the Means of Devotion when one is resigned to God ? If it was any longer needful to Pray, to Watch, to Fast, to go to Church, to frequent the Sacraments, to procure Indulgences, to Honour Images, especially that of the Virgin Mary, which Devotion they tell us is necessary for Salvation, with many other things which seem to be good ?*

*She said : Sir, The Resignation of our Will to that of God supplies all Things ; and when we are arrived at this Resignation, we have no longer need of any Means ; Because God works then in us what pleases him ; and we have no longer need to (a) Act, but to be still and passive. Our Devotions are then without ceasing, and we pray always when we are always resigned to God : For Prayer is nothing else but an Elevation of the Spirit unto him, and it is elevated unto him as long as we receive all from his Hands, and are pleased every Moment with what he ordains. This is the continual Prayer which he demands of Man, saying, That we (b) must alwayes pray, and not faint. He who lifts up his Heart to God only when he is in the Church, or sayes his Pater Noster's, does not pray alwayes : Because he cannot be alwayes in the Church, nor mutter his Prayers from Morning till Night : But he who resigns his Will to that of God prays continually, whether he eat, drink, walk, or take his rest : He is*

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(a) Gal. 2. 20. (b) Luke 18. 1.

alwayes by his Will united to God, and has no need of other Means; because he is arrived at the End, where Means would be a Hindrance to him. He still watches (c) when he is ready at all times to follow the Will of God. He fasts alwayes, when he never takes but what is simply necessary for him in which God directs him. He is alwayes in the Church when he is continually in the presence of God. He frequents also the Sacraments as long as his Spirit converses with God, who comprehends in himself all that is Holy or Sacred. He has the Remission and Indulgence of all his Sins by the Resignation that he makes of his Will to that of his God, because he can never attain to this Resignation without forsaking all sort of Evil; and this (d) is true Repentance, which obtains the Remission of all Sins. He has no need of Images when his Eye and his Heart is fixt upon the Will of God, which makes him remember whatsoever is good and just; and he has no longer need of Intercessours for his Salvation, since he is united to the Will of Him who only can give it.

I said to her, *That I saw clearly enough that all our Salvation and Happiness did depend upon this Resignation of our Will to that of God: But that it was a Loss that this was not taught to all the World, who believed they were sure of their Salvation by the Means of Devotions.*

*She said: Sir, It is a Lamentable thing that all the World should perish for want of knowing the Truth. Secular Persons think they are good when they Trade and do their Business without Fraud, though they never consider that they are sent into this World to lead a Life of Penitence, and are created to be alwayes united in Will to God: Churchmen or Religious Persons believe they shall be saved, provided they go to Church and perform their customary Devotions, without thinking that to be saved they must be resigned to the Will of God. And thus both the one and the other perish through Ignorance, because all in general are created to be resigned in Will to the Will of God, depending immediately upon him; and not on other Things: And though we are obliged to Labour in this Life, yet this is but accidentally, and to*

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(c) Cant. 5. 2. Luke 12. 35, 36. (d) Prov. 28. 13.

satisfie the Penitence due for our Sins; not that God has created us for Labour, but only ordain'd it for Penitence: And instead of fulfilling it by our Labour, we encrease our Sins by the same Means by which we ought to purge them, glorying in our Chains, and rejoycing in our Vallie of Tears: And we will Act, where we ought only to Suffer; and Rule, where we ought to be Subject. This falls out through our Ignorance, for we do not know the True way of Salvation, and we imagine we shall find it by Means which divert us from it instead of bringing us to it. They go sometimes to a Cloyster to find the sure Means of Salvation, and in the mean time all the Exercises that must be performed are often Diversions from God: For so many outward Rules and Gestures prove great Hindrances to the Conversation the Soul ought to have with its God; and these Studied Devotions are often Hypocrisies. If we bow the Knee to shew that we adore and pray to God, while our Thoughts are far from him, this is pure (e) Hypocrisie: If we give Honour or do Reverence to some Image without raising our Thoughts to that which it represents to us, this is pure Idolatry: If we pray to God with the Lips, and the Heart is far from him, it is a Contempt of God: If we use Mortifications of the Body, without the Spirit of Penitence, it is the Pride of Life, for we desire to be esteemed more than others because of our particular Pennances, when God has appointed us all in general common Ones which would be much more for our Salvation: For he who willingly suffers Heat, Cold, and other Incommodities of the Elements, or of our Body, does merit much more than he who chuses Fastings, Watchings, and other things according to his own desires: Because these things are done by our own Will, and will be recompenced only in this VWorld: But the Pennances that are common to all Men are Ordained and Chosen of God for saving Penitences. In which these Penitents do greatly deceive themselves in following their own VWill, and often will not bear patiently with a VVord that contradicts their Behaviour. The Blindness of Men now may truly be bewailed; for in all Things they take Falshood for Truth, and the way

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(e) *Mat. 7. 8.*

of Damnation for that of Salvation. Which would be easie to make appear to all the World, in case they would give Ear to it : For there is but one only thing needful, which is, for Men to resign their Will to that of God : But they are so preoccupied with so many different sorts of Means, which they perswade them are good Things, that they should think they did Evil in resigning their Will to that of God, choosing rather to submit it to a Man subject to his Passions, having forgotten that the Holy Spirit said, (f) *Wo to the Man that puts his confidence in Man.* Take, Sir, this Lesson to your self, and put not your Confidence in any but God. For (g) *all Men are Lyars,* and cannot give Salvation to those to whom they promise it. We have but one only Saviour, who is Jesus Christ ; and one only Essential Commandment, which is, to **DEPEND UPON GOD IN ALL THINGS** : If Men have taught so many different Things, and filled the World with Books to shew that we must depend upon them, do not believe them, *for one thing only is needful* (b).

I asked her, *Why she had shewn me so many different things since we began our Conferences, seeing there is one thing only needful, as I am certainly perswaded ?*

*She said* : Sir, I never taught you any other Means of Salvation but the Doctrine of the Gospel, which is sufficient to bring back the greatest Sinners in the World to a Dependance upon God : Because that Doctrine reaches how to remove all that might hinder this Resignation to God : And when it says that (i) *we must deny our selves*, it tells us that we must be resigned to God ; and in saying that we must *take up our Cross*, it shews the Penitence that we are obliged to perform in this World ; and when we consider the whole Life of Jesus Christ, we are thereby sufficiently taught that we must not rule in this World, nor seek after Dignities, Offices or Traffick, nor build Cloisters or other Edifices, nor lay up Riches here : For his whole Life and Conversation was quite another thing, and he has not at all taught us the Customs that are observed at present ; but Goodness (k), Humility, and

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(f) Jer. 17. 5. (g) Psal. 116. 11. (h) Luke 10. 42  
(i) Mat. 16. 24. (k) Mat. 11. 28.



(1) Poverty. These Things are the true Means to attain to this Dependance upon God, because they remove the Hindrances of our Soul, that thereafter it may resign it self the more easily and freely unto him. Jesus Christ has taught that we are to forsake many (m) Things which prove Hindrances of this Resignation to God : For he who loves the Riches, Honours, Pleasures and Delights of this World, cannot be resigned to God ; nor yet he (n) who loves his Father, his Countrey, or even his own Life. By reason therefore of the Blindness of Men, it was needful that he should manifest to them in particular what they ought to forsake that they may be resigned to God: For if Jesus Christ had only said simply that a Man must be resigned to God, every one would have said or imagined, that they lived in this Resignation ; because they have not Faith but in Speculation, for they imagine they are resigned to God, when they live in a Dependance on their own Will, or that of some Person to whom they submit : And since Jesus Christ came to bring Light into the World, it was necessary that he should open our Eyes by all the Means contain'd in his Gospel, that he might make us see how many Obstacles we put to this DEPENDANCE.

I said to her, *She had declared to me many things besides those which are contained in the Gospel : And since Dependance only upon God was sufficient for Salvation, I might very well have remained ignorant of the Sins of Men, the poor Estate of the Church, the Dominion of Antichrist, with so many other things, which do not concern my Salvation.*

*She said:* Sir, You imagine that these Things do not concern your Salvation, because they do not respect it directly, but indirectly. They respect it in such a manner, as I believe it would be impossible for you to obtain it if you were ignorant of the truth of so many dangerous Evils. You would build your Salvation upon false Suppositions of being resigned to God, when there were no such thing ; and if you have not the knowledge of Evil, you cannot avoid it, but will be deceived to your Loss. For the Wickedness of Men is now so covered over with Vertue, that 'tis hard to distinguish the one from the other.

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(1) *Mat.* 8. 20. (m) *Luke* 14. 26, 33. (n) *Ibid.*

If you perceive not that Men are deceitful, they will deceive you every Moment; and if you believe not that they have forsaken God, you will imitate them, believing that they do well: This pious Opinion of your Neighbour will make you follow Evil insensibly. Thus we must not walk blindly in the matter of our Salvation: For you have more need to discover Evil, that you may avoid it, than Good, to imitate it: Because if your Will were resigned to God without knowing the Wickedness of Men now, they would certainly draw you back from this Resignation to make you take your own Will: And this under pious Pretexts: For they will reckon you to be deceived if you do not follow their wayes of Acting; and if you be resigned to God, you will contract his Qualities of Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth: Which Men will not at all acknowledge, but will take your Righteousness to be Self-preciseness; and your Goodness to be Silliness and want of Wit; and your Truth will be reckoned Detraction as soon as by it you shall discover their Evils: And all this they shall do so dexterously, that you shall be puzzled to know, whether you will nor do better to follow their Sentiments than the Direction of God. Therefore it is so necessary that you know the Wickedness of Men, that you be not deceived by it. And if I have declared to you the poor Condition in which the *Roman Church* is now, I have done it more out of Charity than to make known to you the Works of God: Because so long as you believe that this *Roman Church* is the Holy Church, you will take up with a Dependance upon Her instead of depending upon God; and will indirectly follow the Devil, while you believe you follow God: And if I had not declared to you that we are now in the Reign of Antichrist, you would certainly be deceived, because he Acts his greatest Villanies under the Cloak of Holiness, and introduces his Adherents into the most Eminent Preferments and Dignities of the Church: That (o) he may seduce the very Elect, if it were possible: For now more than Three Fourths of People are bound to the Devil (p) by express Covenant. And if you be ignorant of all these Truths, by what Means shall you avoid their Snares?

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(o) *Mat.* 24. 24. (p) *Rev.* 13. 4.

As long as the Devil shall tempt you by evil Thoughts, you will not be in danger of following his Suggestions; but when he has on his Side, the Priests and the Religious, the Bishops and other Prelats of the Church, you will easily let your self be governed by them, thinking that they are guided by this Spirit of God, though in effect, by that of the Devil. By all which Things you may sufficiently discover the need you have to be informed of all these Evils when you desire to resign your self to God, or else your Resignation will not last: Because Men, the Church and Antichrist, would very shortly find the Means to draw you back, as they do almost all well-disposed Persons, perswading them, that it is fit still to have a good Opinion of our Neighbour, and that we must also depend upon the Church, and that the Priests and the Religious are true Members of it: Though in the Sight of God there is no such thing: For all Men together are as a Deluge of Vices, and the *Roman Church* is the *Babylon* of Confusion, and many of her Pillars are the Members of Antichrist. This being supposed, Sir, do you not think I had reason to declare to you all these things in particular, that you may not be deceived by so great an Abyss of Evils, which would be but too sufficient to hinder you from this RESIGNATION TO THE WILL OF GOD, which is the only thing necessary for Salvation, to which you can never attain without discovering and removing all the Hindrances which out of great Charity I have manifested unto you?

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## The Seventeenth Conference,

*Is a Recapitulation of all the preceding Matters, their Scope and Use.*

*I thanked her greatly for the Goodness she had shewn me in telling me so many things so profitable for my Salvation, promising to observe them as much as I can.*

*She*

*She said* : Sir, In this Practice consists your Salvation : For it matters little to know all the Conduct of the World, and all its Sciences and Secrets : If all this serve not as Means to work out your Salvation, all (g) is Vanity and Amusement : Even Knowledge will serve for our greater Condemnation when we do not put in practice what we know to be good, and do not avoid and hate what we know to be evil. I would not have enlarged in declaring to you so many things of good and evil, if I had not observed in you a desire to put them in practice : For to know the Essence of Vertue without practising it, is nothing else but vain Speculation ; and to know Evil without avoiding it, is a worse Curiosity, which fills our Understanding without any Fruit. I have spoken (r) of true Vertue, that you may follow it rather than what is false ; and also of the Roman Church, that you may not follow her as if she were Holy. I have told you of the Reign of Antichrist, that you may not let your self be deceived by false Appearances of Piety : declaring to you that more than Three Fourths of the World are in confederacy with him, that you may work out your Salvation with Fear, and may trust your self to No body, for the most Wicked are the greatest Hypocrites that they may deceive the better. I have told you, That we are in the Judgment, and that the last Plagues are begun ; that you may not put off your Conversion to another time ; for that which remains to us is short. I have told you that Jesus Christ will come upon Earth to judge the Good and the Wicked, and that he will root out all Evil, that you may aspire after that Happinels, and may decline the Misery of those who shall be sent into Hell. I have told you that Jesus Christ will abide upon Earth, to Reign there with all the Just for ever : that the Expectation of this Glorious Coming may give you Strength to bear with patience the Rods and Tribulations which must shortly fall out, such as the like hath not yet been seen. I have told you, that the World will last for ever, and that none of the Creatures shall perish in their Kinds : that the Hope of your Blessedness may not be founded upon imaginary Goods, and that you may in some manner

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(g) Eccles. 12. 8, 9, 12. (r) You will find the Places where all these Matters are treated of by the Index.



comprehend what Contentment the Souls and Bodies of the Blessed shall have when all Malignity shall be removed from every thing, and all the Elements and other Creatures shall serve for the Delight of Man, who shall rule over all, being united to Jesus Christ in Body and Soul; And this, that you may willingly despise the Delights of this present Life, in the Hope of those of which are to come. I have told you, *that the Jews shall be converted to God, and shall be his People; and that the Catholicks shall be cast off and rejected: that you may never despise any Body, since the Jews, the most despised of all Nations, shall be the most exalted; and of Stones shall be made (s) Children of Abraham; and that you may willingly quit the Maximes of the Roman Church, which for her evil Deeds shall very shortly be rooted out. I have told you, that Man is created for no other end but to take his delight with God: that you may no longer seek for any thing upon Earth, and that you may despise all Things, to enjoy this Conversation with God; having told you also, that this present Life is only a time of Penitence, that all your Labours may be done in this Spirit of Penitence, to which God has subjected all Men for their Sins. In fine, I have told you, Sir, That all the Laws, the Prophets, and all Vertues, do consist in the Resignation of our Will to that of God: that you may not be distracted by so many other different things, but may pass your Life joyfully under this Dependance upon God, which is the least thing we can give to God for so many good Things we have received from him, which he permits us to enjoy provided we will depend upon him in all Things. I have also shewn you, That so many divers Means which the Priests, Monks, and the Religious have taught us for working out our Salvation, are things that withdraw us from it, by which we are seduced and deceived: For they make us depend upon Men more than upon God: Which is an Idolatry that has infected all Christendom, in which no Body studies any longer to resign his Will to that of God, but every one enjoys and disposes of Things at his own Will, as if he were his own Sovereign. One will be Great, and another Rich; one will Rule over others, and will be Obey'd and Serv'd; one goes in a Coach, another*

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(s) *Matth. 3. 9.*

upon Horse: In short, Every one will follow his Delights and Pleasures according to his own Inclination, believing notwithstanding that they work out their Salvation, because the Priests and Monks promise it to them. These are new Gods and new Saviours, who have changed the Order established by God, our Father and Creatour, and the Duties which his Son Jesus came to teach us. They lead us in the Way to Hell, perswading us that 'tis that to Paradise: With these Perswasions every one suffers himself to be deceived and seduced, there being none now in Christendom who believe that they cannot be saved without resigning their Will to that of God: This nevertheless is an Eternal Truth, that will never change let Man do what he will: If he do not acknowledge the Dependance he has upon God in all Things, he shall never be saved; and if he do not take up the Counsels of the Gospel as the true Means taught by God for returning to this Dependance, he shall never be saved: For God teaches nothing that is useles, but only Things precisely necessary, to which all the World ought to submit, This no Body does, for they believe Men more than God: Though the most part are Rul'd by the Devil, who gains the most part of Men to himself by the Means of these wild Shepherds, who abandon the Flock to the Power of the Infernal Wolf to destroy them with themselves for ever, taking them off from God to draw them to themselves: I have told you also, *That there are no longer any true Christians upon Earth:* that you may become one, and may not blindly suppose your self to be so: For there can be no Christians, but they who obey the Doctrine of Jesus Christ: All others are deceived in believing they are: For God does not change upon the Changes of Men: We are now as much obliged to depend upon God, as *Adam*, the First Man, was; and as much obliged to Labour the Ground as he, though we had committed no other Sin but what he did in us: We must also now follow the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, as the Primitive Christians did, because this Doctrine is immutable, and will never change: Therefore he who does not follow it is no true Christian, and cannot be saved without becoming so. No Body should flatter himself in this Matter. We must imitate Jesus Christ, or *(r)* perish

(r) *John. 15. 6.*

for ever : Because, both by the Will of *Adam* and by our own, we are all fallen into this Sin of Ingratitude, that we will not depend upon God : And therefore we have need to take up the Law of the Gospel, that we may return to a Dependance upon God, which is so just and reasonable. Though God had never demanded it of Man, he is bound both by Divine and Humane Right to render to God this Submission of his Will ; and he would certainly do it if he were not diverted from it by Men like himself : Because even Natural reason obliges him to depend upon him from whom he receives all Things. This, Humane Wisdom has diverted, having found out so many Reasons and Arguments to favour our Self-will, that all People believe they may lawfully follow it without offending him who has reserved it for himself. These, Sir, are *all blind who lead the blind, and both fall into the ditch* (u). See that you never be of that Crew ; but believe in the Light that God manifests unto you. I have spoken TRUTH to you, not out of an Affectation to be believed or followed, but from a design and desire of your Salvation. All that I have said, is necessary for you, if you will use it well : Because we cannot Love God without knowing him, nor follow Vertue without conceiving what it is : In like manner we cannot avoid Delusion without discovering it, nor escape the Snares of the Devil without turning away from them. Make a good use of all these Things, and you shall be happy both in this World and the other. I doubt not but my way of speaking may be somewhat uneasy, to you, because it agrees not with your Philology, Theology, or other Scholastick Sciences : But believe me, I never professed any Humane Sciences : I choose rather to be ignorant of them than know them, and if I could learn in a Quarter of an Hour all the Learning of the Schools, I would not employ even that Little Time about them : Because I know that Humane Learning is a great Hindrance to the Holy Spirit : and also the Time is come that (x) *God will destroy the Wisdom of the Wise, and abolish the Prudence of the Prudent* : And therefore I cannot use fine Discourses, but such only as make the plain Truth be understood : Words and

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(u) *Mat.* 15. 14.     (x) *Isa.* 29. 14.

Terms may be contended about, but not the real Meaning, which is true. I will not dispute with the Learned, because God will overcome them very shortly by the Effects of my Words; nor will I polish my Language, because simple Plainness pleases God more than the greatest Eloquence, which is subject to Vanity: For he that speaks that he may talk well, is full of Vain-glory: Renouncing which, I seek nothing but plain Words that may express my Thoughts.

I believe, Sir, you have understood me well enough, and I can tell you no more whereby I may co-operate to your Salvation: There remains nothing but to put it in practice. This you will do more easily in a Solitude, or Desert, than elsewhere, because of the Corruption of Men, who prove great Hindrances to us; and also because of the Power the Devil has now over their Minds, whereby he may infatuate all those who are yet sound and entire. Flee therefore, Sir, to avoid these Dangers, and be afraid lest you be diverted from your good Purpose, and do not look back (y) like Lot's Wife, who was changed into a Pillar of Salt. Yet a little Penitence, and then God will deliver you from it, to enter into the Joy that shall never end; This is what I wish you, and bid you. Adieu.

*I was troubled to hear that she would leave me, entreating she would not withdraw from me, since I resolved to follow what she had taught me, which was nothing else but the denying of my self, and a dependance upon God.*

*She said:* Sir, It will be more for your purity to stay alone: Because I am but a Creature as you are, and we must cleave to the Creatour only without Interruption: He will lead you at his pleasure, provided you be resigned to his Will; you need no more Instructions from any. I have told you abundantly what may bring you to an Union with God. To speak more would be henceforth but a Repetition of what is already said, which would rob us both of our Time, and that would be better employed in the Practice than in Repetitions. Leave me to my Liberty, and take also yours. God did not create us together, He will Save us though we be



separate in Body. True Union consists in a conformity of the Will with God, and not in particular Conferences. I must confess I have often withdrawn from conversing with God to speak to you of so many diverse Things: But I judg'd them necessary for your Salvation; and therefore they were not uneasy to me; But now that you know the Truth of many Things, it is not expedient to speak to you any longer. God will still teach you sufficiently, provided you continue faithful to him. He never denied what Men ask of him for their Salvation. You ought to have no other Designs. Let the (4) World be overturned; Let the *Roman Church* perish; Let the Elements be moved against Sinners; all this cannot touch you, provided you keep firmly united to God. Quit all Things willingly to find this Union. It matters little whether I am with you or not: Provided you be with God, He should suffice you: For he only can save you, and no Body else. There is always a Mixture when the Creature cleaves to its like. I often despised those who cleave to others, even though it was under some pious Pretext. I will not do my self what I despise in others.

I said to her, *She had promised to explain to me the 24th. Chapter of St. Matthew: That she ought at least, to give me it before she leave me.*

*She said:* Sir, I do not willingly fail in my Promise. Give me the Text of that Chapter, and I will explain it Word by Word; and I wish that all sincere Persons may see it, that they may discover that this Chapter speaks of the present Time. Every one reads it without understanding it: Nevertheless, there are fair Advertisements to beware of this dangerous Time in which we live at present. These are not Tales made at pleasure, but Truths come from the Mouth of Jesus Christ himself, which every one ought to Learn, and follow the Counsels that he gives: They are most saving, and fit for escaping (b) the Evils to come, which hang over our Heads. I must give it in Writing for an eternal Memorial, that it may be observed whether all that is contained in it shall not come to pass in our Time. Do not oppose what you shall find contrary to your Learning, or old Impressions, be-

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(a) *Psal.* 46. 3, &c. (b) *Luke* 21. 36.

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cause the Holy Spirit will give the perfect Understanding of all the Holy Scriptures, which has not been hitherto heard of: For we are fallen into the Fulness of Time. If you receive them with Humility of Heart, you shall understand all Things perfectly. But you must become an Infant, and cease from your own Wisdom: For God reveals (c) his Secrets to Babes, and hides them from the Great and Wise of the Earth. You must not control the Holy Spirit, or say, *Such a Father explains this thus, or otherwise*: Because Fulness is still more than a Portion. You will find what I shall say more clear than all that the Holy Fathers ever said: Because the Time is come of the Accomplishment of all Things: But you must simplify your Understanding as a little Child, else you cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

*I brought her the Text of the Gospel, promising entirely to submit my Understanding as much as was possible, that I might receive the Light of the Holy Spirit.*

*She said*: Sir, This Submission is the Preparation required: For if you set up for the Doctour, or for the knowing Man you will oppose the Light of the Holy Spirit, the Source of all Wisdom. It must alwayes be believed and acknowledged, that he is wiser than all the Doctours that ever were in the World, and that we learn more by a small Ray of his Light, than by a Hundred Years of very assiduous Study. Therefore, reckon all (d) your Learning Ignorance, and become (e) as a Child newly born again, that you may receive these new Notices, which will give you more Light than all the Fathers had together: Because they never discovered the hid Treasures (f); for the Time was not yet come. Every one spoke of it according to his Conceit, and not according to what it really was: For it was a Sealed (g) Book; that none was worthy to open but Jesus Christ himself after he was put to death and Crucified. To this very Time there is nothing in all the Holy Scripture fulfilled but this Death; which will make way for the Wonders of God, that have remained hid till now, and begin to be revealed to those who shall be humble in Heart: But the Wise (h) shall

(d) 1 Cor. 8. 2. (e) Matth. 18. 3. 1 Pet. 2. 2. (f) Mat. 13. 44. (g) Rev. 5. 1---9. (h) Isa. 29. 14.

perish with their Wisdom. Therefore, I exhort you, Sir, to Simplicity, and Submission, that you may be worthy to receive the Light which breaks forth in our Days, and to behold the (i) *New Jerusalem* descend from Heaven, adorned as a Bride in the Day of her Espousals. The Alliance (l) of God with Men will then be accomplished: The Earth will then be renewed. All Creatures will quit their Malignity, which shall be confined to the Center of the Earth (m) to torment the Bodies and Souls of all those who would not submit their Wills to God. They shall receive Pains and Anguish according to the Measure of their Sins, being overwhelmed with the Malignities which were caused by these Sins.

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## The Eighteenth Conference,

*Speaks of Hell, and of the Damned, which shall be they who have followed their own Will, which is the cause of all Evil, and that few are disposed to quit it, that they may resign themselves to God, and receive the Divine Truth.*

I asked her, *If all Men who will not submit their Will to God shall be confined to Hell?*

*She said:* Yes, Sir, assuredly they shall: None shall escape Hell (n) who have followed their own Will: And this most righteously: For God cannot save him who withdraws from him, and who with his full Reason, and the Consent of his Will, will independently follow his own Inclinations, as if he were Sovereign, and without a Creatour. We know well enough we cannot save our

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(i) Rev. 21. 2. (l) Ibid. v. 3. (m) Rev. 20. 14, 15.  
(n) Isa. 66. 3, 4.

selves, and that our Salvation depends upon God; and yet we hope to be saved, though we have quitted our Dependance upon God, and adhere to our selves? This is a false Perswasion which the Devil and the World set before us, to make us insensible of our Misery. For God will never save him (o) who will not depend upon him. If through Frailty we commit some Acts of Independance upon God, and afterwards repent of them, we may yet hope for Pardon: But when we see that all Men live and dye in following their own Wills, and will not leave it off, being readier to murmur against God than to yield up their Wills to him, he must of necessity render to them according to their Works. God made no (p) Malignity in the Elements, nor in any other Creatures, having created all good and perfect: But Sin (q) and the Self-will of Man has brought a Malignity into all Things: And therefore it belongs to him, as being the Work of his Hands: And if it be just to render to each one what belongs to him, it is necessary that Man have for his Portion (r) the Malignity of all the Creatures to all Eternity, as being the Works of (s) his Hands, that the Fire burn him, the Water swallow him up, the Wind bluster, the Earth be Thorns to prick him, the Dogs bite him, the Wolf devour him, the Lion tear him, the Serpent poyson him; and all the other Creatures shall spue out their Malignity upon Man, who brought it upon them, by forsaking his Dependance upon God.

I said to her, *That upon this Supposition, all shall be damned: Because none resign their Will to God, since every one enjoys it as much as is possible for them.*

*She replied:* Sir, I have told you long ago, that Paradise was shut; and that none did any longer enter into it: Because no Body resigns his Will to that of God. The Maxims of the Church have so blinded Mens Spirits by so many different wayes of Salvation, that none consider the Obligation that lies on them to resign their Wills to God. They think to be saved by going to Church, frequenting the Sacraments, &c. though nevertheless they follow their own Will in every Thing. This ruins all

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(o) Psal. 73. 27. (p) Wisd. 1. 13, 14. (q) Rom. 5. 12.  
(r) Psal. 11. 6. (s) Isa. 3. 10.



the World, and has caused the general Judgment: For God having beheld (r) all the Earth, found not one who was resigned to him, nor so much as one that did good: All having forsaken (u) God to follow their own Wills. And this general Evil has caused the general Sentence, which is irrevocable: Because there is Time no longer. If any desires to be converted, he must make haste: For the Last Times are near their End. They began when (x) Jesus Christ became Man, and by Grace have continued till now, to give Man a full Measure, and abundance of Time for his Conversion. Time is come to its End. Yet (y) a little Suffering, and the Judgment will end, and the Wicked shall go to the Abyſs of all Evils (z), and the Converted to the Enjoyment of all Good, which shall never end, and that not only spiritual but also bodily and (a) material: For all the Creatures will render their Duty to Man, as soon as he shall pay his Duty to God. They were created to serve for the Delight of Man (b), as he was created to serve (c) for the Delight of God; And as soon as he shall be converted, and enter into a Dependence upon his God, (d) he shall experience that the Beasts and Elements shall submit also to the Will of Man; For for this they were all created: And if we see the Beasts and Elements rebel against Man, this is for no other reason but because he rebels against his God: For else all inferiour Things would be entirely subject to Man, if he were entirely subject to God, even though it were in this Miserable Life. We have Examples of this in the Life of many Saints, who because they resigned their Wills to God, had in this Time of Penitence (g) the Power to command the Elements, and to be familiar with the Wild Beasts. One carried Fire without being burnt by it: Another stay'd the Sun (h): And several have tam'd Wild Beasts, and commanded the Wind and Tempests of the Sea, with so many other Wonders, playing with Serpents, and recreating themselves with Birds which assembled by the Command of some Servants of God. This

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(r) Psal. 14. 2, 3. (u) Psal. 81. 12. (x) 1 Cor. 10. 11. 1 John 2. 18. (y) Heb. 10. 37. (z) Matth. 25. 46. (a) 1 Pet. 3. 13. (b) Gen. 1. 26. (c) Prov. 8. 31. (d) Isa. 11. 6, &c. (g) Heb. 11. 34. (h) Josh. 10. 12.

is a certain Proof, that it is Sin only that gives all the Malignity to every Thing; and that nothing but the Rebellion that Man has raised against his God, renders all the Elements and other Creatures Rebels against him. If we would from this time yield up our Will into God's Hands, and submit our selves entirely to him, we should immediately find that all Things would subject themselves to us without any constraint. How greatly does Man wrong himself, when he will needs dispose of his own Will? He makes himself miserable in this World, and far more in that to come; Whereas by being willing to depend upon God, he has all under his Power, together with Eternal Bliss. What Infatuation of Spirit is it, that we will not do a Thing so good, so just, and so reasonable, as to resign our Will to that of God! If Men were taught this, as they are other frivolous Devotions, it would be impossible that any would deny God so profitable a Submission. But they let themselves be amused by the Discourses of Men, who propose a Salvation, without being able to give it. These are those false Christs and false Prophets of whom Jesus Christ has so often told, that we must (i) take heed of them, who have deceived all the World, so that none think any longer of resigning themselves to God, or of doing saving Penitence.

I said to her, *There were yet divers Persons who desired to be resigned to God, and also to do Penitence, which cannot be avoided in this World.*

*She said:* Sir, You take the Bark often for the Wood: For those who say they will be resigned to God, have nothing but outward Words: For if they were truly so, they (k) would be governed by God; and would no longer labour for the Earth, but only for Heaven. Even the Labour that is necessary for the support of Life would be done only to fulfil their Penitence appointed by God. But when we see them aim at Places, Honours and Dignities; or Deal and Traffick to acquire Riches or Pleasures; that one would be a Priest, another a Religious; one build Cloysters, another Houses, as if he were to abide in them for ever: All these Things, with a Thou-

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(i) *Matth.* 24. 4, 5. 11. 24. (k) *Psal.* 37. 5. 73. 23, 24.

land others, are infallible Evidences that God does not govern our Will: For he could not move us to make Tabernacles here, since he has sent us hither only to undergo a short Penitence. He could not incite us to build what must be so quickly destroyed. Neither Jesus Christ, nor his Apostles and Disciples built Temples or Houses, being contented with what was simply necessary. In which the Heathens will rise up against us in the Day of Judgment, who did so despise the shortness of this Life, that they would not build Houses, contenting themselves with a Tub to cover them from the Injuries of the Season. Others threw their Money into the Sea, not judging it necessary for so short a Life, though since that Time ours is much shortened. Neither can it be true that we are willing to do Penitence, because every one avoids Sufferings as much as he can; and to do saving Penitence, it must be voluntary, and suffered for fulfilling the Will of God: For else we may suffer much without Meriting, as Robbers and Thieves do.

I said to her, *That this ought to be preached through all the World, that they who would perish through Ignorance might hear the Truth and be converted.*

She said: Sir, You may do as you please: As for me I retire: For I am not sent to preach, but simply to declare the Truth, as I have done to you. You may have sufficiently remarked in all my Discourses, and my Life; if there were any Affectations or Passions which should move me to tell you these Things. I am perswaded, in the sight of God, that I have no Self-Interest in it, nor any desire to please or displease Men, nor to affect the speaking new or marvellous Things. No, Sir, I am not led by that Spirit, but by that of Jesus Christ, who had such Compassion for Men, that for them he endured a bitter Passion and the Death of the Cross: If you preach these Things to Men of good Judgment, and who thirst after the Truth, they will gladly hear you, and yield themselves, and return to God: For they will easily see, that here is no Flattery for any Body; nor yet Contempt, or sensual Animosity; but pure solid Truths, which none can resist but they who are in League with Satan, and love Lyes, and resist the Truth. Those will very hardly receive Truths that are so opposite to them; they will induce effeminate Spirits to reject these Things as evil, perceiving that

that the knowledge of these will take from their Master the Devil the Power to deceive by Falshood and Hypocrisie; and that he will be forced very quickly to discover his Mischievous Reign (1): Because he shall not be able to catch Souls any longer under the colour of Piety and Holiness, as he has done hitherto. And his furious Reign shall be far less dangerous; For so soon as he shall be known for the Devil, no Body will follow him any longer, except they who wilfully yield up themselves to him: Whereas at present every one follows him blindly: But so soon as his Malice shall be discovered, he shall have no longer Power over Innocent Souls. Tell the Truth boldly, Sir, to all good Men in Confidence: But beware of the Adherents of the Enemy, and of those (m) who let themselves be governed by his Spirit, though they be not precisely in Covenant with the Devil: Because these will do you much Mischief when they think they are doing well: For they who have their Minds infatuated do serve the Devil as well as Sorcerers themselves: The one directly, and the other indirectly. You will still discover them by the resistance which they will make to the Truth, for they will not so much as hear it: Because they know very well they cannot change the Truth: They endeavour at least to reject and despise it, that no Body may receive it. This will be the Devils last Effort. For as soon as the Truth shall be known, it will strongly resist him, and at last will break his Head. Observe still, Sir, the Disposition of those to whom you would declare these Truths: And when you find opposition from them, leave off speaking to them: For those who shall be disposed to profit by the Truth, will give Ear to it willingly, and with Hungry Desires will search even to the Bottom; that they may discover the Essence of it: For no good Men can resist the Truth, nor the Things which are proposed to them, without having examined whether they be Good or Evil: But the Wicked will resist it, before they know it: And if they can catch a Word different from their School Terms, they will take it in a quite contrary Sence. Therefore, Sir, do not amuse your self with Questions and Disputes, For this would be to cast Roles before Swine:

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(1) Rev. 12. 12, 17. 13. 3, 7, 8. (m) Mat. 10. 17.



Offer them only to those who will take pleasure to smell them, and not to these who will cast them into the Dung-hill. All good Men will feel in the Bottom of their Souls that this cannot come from the Devil : For he is the Father of Lyes ; and never incites to Self-denial, because he is too proud : Nor to the Love of God, because he hates him : And yet less to resign our Will to that of God, for he catches all Men by their Self-will. All my Discourses have for their Scope all that is contrary to the Devil, who is never contrary to himself.

## The Ninteenth Conference,

*Sheweth, That the Spirit of Antichrist hinders Men from discovering the saving Truth ; and that the Heathens are more resigned to God than the Christians at present.*

I said to her, That I thought no Body in the World could resist so clear Truths, without betraying his own Conscience : That all the Things she had told me did speak forth themselves, and were attended with such solid Foundations and such firm Reasons, that the Learned and Unlearned might comprehend them, and that the Scope of all was the Glory of God and the Salvation of Souls ; and that there was nothing in them that favoured of the Earth.

She said : If we were not fallen into the Reign of Antichrist, no Body could resist so clear Truths. All the World would feel them, and would discover his Deceits ; every one would flee to the Desert to do Penitence, bewailing his past Life, and the Errours wherein he had lived for so long a time. But the Michief is, that this Antichrist has so great a number of Adherents who take up his Quarrel, and resist the Truth, that the good themselves have difficulty to receive it : For they disfigure it, and make it pass for Lyes and Heresies, telling those who  
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advance it, that they would seduce the People, (n) as they said of Iesus Christ when he brought Light into the World, calling him a *Seducer* (o) of the People, or (p) one that had a Devil. The Power of Darknes is much encreast since the Time that he was upon Earth, and nothing is to be look'd for but (q) Outrages from all the Devil's Adherents. In this case a Man must count it a Happines to suffer (r) Persecution for Righteousness sake, and believe that there is (s) no more blessed Death than to dye a Martyr for the Truth. But he must beware of Men (t), and use the Wisdom of the Serpent, and rather part with his Skin than lose his Soul. You will find more Welcome, Sir, among the *Jews* and *Heathens*, than among the *Catholicks*, who condemn others to Authorize their own Customs, despising the Doctrine of Iesus Christ, who sayes, (u) *Judge not, and you shall not be judged; condemn not, and you shall not be condemned.* These *Catholicks* condemn all those who do not follow them: This is the cause why they are judged, and condemned first to be rooted out. They condemn so many holy *Heathens*, who will go before them (x) in the Day of Judgment, because they were faithful to God though they had not any Laws or Instructions to know Him: Nevertheless many resigned their Wills to that of God, and obeyed the Truth in their Lives; whereas these *Christians* follow Lyes, of which the Devil (y) is the Father; and none of them will resign themselves to God, nor take notice of the Truth which discovers the shortness of this miserable Life, and the certainty of one that shall be Eternal. These *Heathens* knew a God, to whom they resigned themselves; and seeing the Misery of this Life, they bewailed it; they laughed when they considered the Stupidity of Men who took pleasure in this Life; and judg'd, that they ought not to be called *Men*, because they did not use their Reason to discover the Truth of Things: For he who went through the City of *Athens* with his Lantern, seeking for a Man in the midst of so many Thousands as were in the Market-

(n) Luke 23. 2. (o) Mat. 27. 63. (p) John 8. 48.  
 (q) Matth. 10. 25. (r) Matth. 5. 11. (s) Rev. 14. 13.  
 (t) Matth. 10. 17. (u) Matth. 7. 1. (x) Mat. 8. 11, 12.  
 (y) John 4. 44.

place, could not be ignorant that they who were about him were all Men : But seeing they were all occupied, in buying, and selling, and Trading for the Earth, he could not acknowledge them to be Reasonable Men : Because he who has Reason, ought to use it for his Eternal Happiness, else he is nothing but a Beast : For Reason only makes a Man ; without which he does not differ from the Brute Beasts, for they are unreasonable Animals, and Men are reasonable ones : Laying aside which, they are as much Brutes as the Beasts. This made the Philosopher search for a Man among so great a Number, and could not find one ; because all spent their Lives in Worldly Business, instead of employing them in the Study of the Knowledge of God, and of the Truth, which is the same God. And they condemn those Heathens as damned, and for my part I look upon them as SAINTS, and believe (y) they will come to Reign with Jesus Christ upon Earth to condemn the Christians, who besides the Light of the Heathens, had Lawes and Commandments from God, with the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, which obliged them to a farther Knowledge of God, and the Immortality of their Souls, the Shortness and Misery of this Life, that they might despise it, and the Vanity of perishing Goods, that they might abandon them. Nevertheless, not one of these Christians does any of these Things.

I asked her, *If it was indeed possible that not so much as one Christian should be resigned to God, nor have the Vertues of the Heathens ?*

She said : Yes, Sir : This is most true, that (z) not so much as one Christian is resigned to God, nor understands true Vertue, as much as the Heathens did : Because none apply themselves to it. Since they became Idolaters of Men, they have left off to know God, and abandoned themselves to the Will of their Idols, instead of the Will of God. They Preach and Teach through all Christendom, *That we must depend upon Men, whom they call the Fathers of the Church ; That we must believe and follow them, even with a blind Obedience :* In which they prefer themselves to God ; who demands only of Man that he obey him in what he shall make known to him ; having

(y) Mat. 8. 4. Rom. 2. 10, 11. (z) Isa. 59. 16.

given him Eyes to discover this Beautiful Universe, (a) that when he sees the Heavens, the Earth, the Sun, the Stars, and all the Elements, with so many different Creatures so marvellous and so well ordered; he might clearly perceive that all those Things must proceed from a God; since Men and Nature can make nothing like them. Moreover, when Man considers himself he discovers evidently by his Understanding, that his Soul, his Memory, his Understanding cannot come but from a God, for no such Thing can come from Nature; no more than his Body, since all the Industry of Men is not capable to make so much as one Hair of our Head. This obliges us to acknowledge a God, by so many different Operations, without being put to know God blindly, no more than to love or follow him blindly; as these Christians say we must obey and follow Men blindly: For when we consider all the Works of God, and observe what he has done for us, it is impossible we should cease to love and follow such a Benefactor. If we had but the Light of a Heathen, we would not readily yield this blind Submission to Men: Because they are not our Creatours, nor our Saviours; and our Dependance ought to be upon the Lord who created all Things: But not on frail Man like our selves, who can give us nothing but Promises without Effects; for they deceive us when they promise us Salvation, since they cannot give it to themselves: And yet all the World believes they shall save all Christians, of whom I know not so much as one that is in the way of Salvation; because they neither know God, nor true Vertue; but have their Understandings blinded by the Discourses of Men, who desire to love, and be loved by their like; and instead of leading them to the knowledge of the true God to love and follow him, they draw them to love themselves: And by this blind conduct, every one runs to Perdition, while many believe that they are in the way of Salvation. So that I might well travel through all Christendom with a Lantern, to find out so much as one Man, as the Philosophers did through the City of *Athens*: Because no Body any longer uses his Reason, to see the Obligation that we have to depend upon the Will

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(a) *Rom.* 1. 20.



of God, nor yet to consider the Misery and Shortness of this Life, nor the Vanity of transitory Things; but are in all this as if they were void of Understanding, and follow one another blindly, without considering any other Thing. For if Man did only use his Reason, he would see clearly that he is obliged to depend upon his God, since he has received all from him, and can pretend to nothing but from him: His Natural Instinct does sufficiently encline him to this Dependence. Though they call this a *Heathen* Light, this is not that it is simply Natural, but it is an Impression that God makes on our Understanding, which leads us to know God, and to submit our selves to him: Which if we do, we are happy in whatsoever Nation we be: For God never demanded any other thing of Men but this Resignation to his Will; and if he has since appointed Laws; this was but by reason of Mens Frailty, having never formerly subjected them to any Laws but that of depending upon him: As he would not yet, provided we would submit to him. This our Christians do not, though they hope to be saved,

I said to her, *That it troubled me much to hear that not so much as one Christian was resigned to God.*

*She said:* Sir, That you may not believe this blindly, recal to mind a little the Persons whom you have held for good Men, and consider narrowly all their Behaviour, that you may see, whether they are not guided by their own Wills, even in their pious Works; whether they are not done from their own Inclinations? You will find that this has always been at the Helm to govern all; and that if it were not to please our selves, many good Works would be left undone. For my part, I have remarked this in all the Persons whom I have known; and I never knew but one Maid (*d*) who was resigned to God: Nevertheless, I have met with those who had the greatest Reputation for Vertue, and I alwayes perceived, that their Actions, though good, were mingled with Self-love: Which hinders a Resignation to God: For as long as our Self-will will bear Rule, God cannot have our Submission.

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(b) *Psal.* 27. 8. *John* 1. 9. (c) *Acts* 10. 34, 35. (d) *This is She who wrote the Two Letters in the 42 Testimony of the Testimony of the Truth.*

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These are all dead Works, which shall be recompenced only in this World, and not at all in the other. I have seen Persons given to Fasting, Warching, and Prayer, diligent in going to Church, and in relieving the Poor, and yet notwithstanding of this they subjected not their Wills to that of God : But followed their own as much as they could, imagining that they did all for God, while there was no such thing. For if God had govern'd their Wills, they would have done all their Actions, both small and great, in the Righteousness, Goodness and Truth of God : From which they were very far estranged ; and if they had been capable of it, I would have made appear to them, that their best Actions were very blameable, and accompanied with Presumption, and Self-satisfaction. In this many deceive themselves, and believe they are in a State of Salvation, though they be very far from it. You must not be troubled, Sir, to hear it said, *That there is not so much as one Christian in the way of Salvation* : Since it is true, and none are resigned to God : But we ought to bewail their Blindness, and desire and pray that they may be converted for the Time to come, since there is Time for Repentance, and Leisure to return to God, even to the last Moment of our Life. If I should say that all Christians are in a State of Salvation, as all these false Prophets do, their Salvation would certainly be desperate : Because every one would rest on such a dangerous Estate. It were far better to tell the Truth, by declaring that they are not in the way of Salvation, that they may strive to recover it, than to flatter them with false Words : And it should be more acceptable to them to hear that they are not resigned to God, if it be most true, than to hear that dreadful Sentence, (e) *Go ye cursed into Everlasting Fire, when they should have thought to hear, Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom* : For it will be too late at Death to return to a Dependence upon God : And it is not so now. By which you may see, Sir, that there is more reason to be troubled when we hear them say, that Christians are in the way of Salvation, than when they say, they are in that of Damnation, when it is true, as it is, because of their Blindness : For if I

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(e) *Matth.* 25. 41.

did not most evidently perceive this, I would not affirm such unpleasant Things. But I should be without Charity, if I should not declare so important Truths, while we are yet living in the Time of Penitence: For I perceive inwardly in my Soul, that the Thoughts, Words, and Actions of Men, are not at all directed by God: For they partake not of his Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth; but on the contrary, they are all full of Self-interest, Self-honour, or Pleasures: And notwithstanding, no Body will willingly be reprov'd: Every one desires to continue as he is, without knowing his Fault, and much less amending it; covering and palliating his Miseries, and excusing them as much as he can. So that I see no good that can be done for the Conversion of Christians; for they trust too much to the false Perswasion of their Salvation. Therefore, I will retire, and bid you Adieu. Not that I am displeased to be among Men, to whom I am like; but it is because I perceive them to be Enemies of God, and they do not desire to know it. With which my Heart is very much oppress'd.

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## The Twentieth Conference,

*Shews, That there are very few among the Christians who desire to be converted unto God, and to return to a Dependence upon him: And treats of the necessity of this Dependence.*

I asked her, If she did not fear that she should Act against Charity to her Neighbour, by retiring thus from their Conversion; since she might do them great good.

She said: No Sir, I Act not against Charity to my Neighbour: Because I cannot help him, if he will not have Help. I have had but too much Experience of this, that Men will not change their Life, at least the Christians:

For

For I was never acquainted with others, to know if they are as much hardened as those who are called Christians: For those, I say, I have done all that could be done to shew them the dangerous State in which they live; but I profited very little by it. They love rather to see and hear fine Things: But for resigning themselves to God, no Body will do it but by Word, which is as far from the Truth as is Heaven from Hell. Every one says, that he will be resigned to God; while in the mean time, no Body will deny his own Will in the least thing; we hear them often say, *I will what God wills*; And the least Contradiction they meet with, does alarm them; and those who promise them Salvation, comfort them, and flatter them, saying, *That this is to be patient, when they murmur not against the Appointments of God, and that they must only resign themselves, and thereby they shall merit much*: As if God were obliged to Recompence their Impatience. For to suffer Contradictions, is common and necessary, both to the Wicked and to the Good: Because no Body can be free of them in this miserable World, where every one must suffer, will he, nill he: But to say that we are resigned to God, when we are only resigned by force, is a Lie; because this resignation is a necessary thing, when we cannot hinder things to fall out against our Will. For to be resigned to God, we must have no more Self-will, to will this and not to will that: For a Thing that we have resigned, we do not hold nor possess it any longer to desire to use it. Resignation to God, is a total dependance upon his Disposal, as well for our Soul as for our Body, and for all that concerns us, bridling our own Will in every Thing without willing or desiring any thing any longer, knowing well that Gods Conduct is always more perfect, than all that we could wish for. If it rain, if it be fair, if it be hot, or cold, if we are in Peace, or War, in Adversity or Prosperity, it matters little, provided we be resigned to God: It is he who governs all these Things, and can never do evil. If our Friends live or dye, what the matter, when God ordains it? Our Life, our Death, must not be wisht for nor desired by us, because we are not capable enough to judge what is good or evil for us: And to offer to give Laws to God, is to mock him, since he understands and knows all Things: He sees far better than we what is good and perfect, because he is the



Wisdom that cannot be ignorant of any thing, and the Goodness that can do no evil, and who orders all Things to a good End, so that if we were not void of Understanding, we would not entertain a Thought of contradicting any Thing that befalls us : For all turns to good to him (g) who is resigned to God; and though we esteem it a Happiness to have good Desires, yet it is a Thing infinitely more perfect to have no Desires, (b) with a Dependance upon God : Because a never so little mixture with this Dependance alwayes hinders the Effect of the Ordinances of God, as if we would be Tutors to him, or give out our Law for doing well. In the mean time we are so short sighted, that we do not discern Good from Evil : So that if God should permit that to befall us which we often ask and desire of him as Good, great Mischiefs would have come upon us, so blind are we in the matter of our Salvation. And yet we will not resign our Will to that of God but in Word only : So that if I should tell Christians now adays, that they will never be saved without resigning their Wills to that of God, they would say, that I damn all the World : For they look on the Salvation and Damnation of Men, as if they could Damn and Save them, whereas it is God only that can Save, and Sin only that can Damn. Therefore by conversing with Men I will not profit them for their Salvation.

I said to her, *That God having imparted to her such Light, it ought not to remain under a Bushel : But should be set in a Candlestick.*

*She said :* Sir, What will it avail to set the Light upon a Candlestick, when those who are present will shut their Eyes that they may not see it ? These Christians are so pre-occupied with their own way of Devotions, and with seeming Vertues, that they esteem nothing else ; and as soon as they shall see the Brightness of this Light, their Eyes will be dazled with it, and they will even complain of the Light of it. How is it possible to shew to any that which he will not see ? I have conversed among others with the most pious of the Religious, who could not imagine that there was another way of Salvation, but a

(f) *Psal.* 131. 2. (g) *Rom.* 8. 28. (b) *Psal.* 131. 2.

good,

good observance of their Rules; and they thought they did a thing well-pleasing to God, to maintain the Honour and Profit of their Order; and for my part, I judge this to be so far from a Dependance upon God, that I think it is the real Mean to take them off from it: For as long as we are tied to Rules, and Studies to observe them well, it is alwayes the Person that Acts; and the Care of preserving the Honour and Profit of the Order, is indirectly the seeking their own Honour and Profit: Which is not only a Vice, but also a false Vertue that deceives them to their Ruine; and though I assure these Persons that there is no other way of Salvation but that of resigning their Will to God, yet they will not hear this Note, insisting alwayes on the first Tune they learned; and they think they are resigned to God, since they have quit the World to enter into a Religious Order, and they apply themselves to the observing of their Rules, they say their Offices, and obey their Superiours, choosing rather to resign themselves to Men their Equals, than to their God, imagining that he is served with Reverences, Bowings of the Knee, and a great many common Prayers: Without remembring that, 'tis he who (i) searches the Reins, and examines the Conscience; and that all these outward Things are nothing but Grimaces when they are not done from an abundance of inward Sentiments; and that it is said to such Persons, (k) This People worship me with their Lips, and their Heart is far from me. All Christendom is full of this Blindness, and they believe that God is served by outward Things. Nevertheless it is a certain Truth, That (l) God has no need of material Things, but desires only (m) the consent of our Will to take his pleasure in us: Which he cannot do so long as we will take our pleasure with the Creatures, or with any Earthly Things, even though according to our Opinion they should be good Things: Because he is jealous of our Heart, and will not suffer a Corival; and he has reason: For it appertains to him alone: Because he created it without the Interposition of any other. Notwithstanding, Man is so unthankful that he denies him his Heart and his Will, and would content him with Words and

(i) Jer. 17. 10. (k) Isa. 29. 1, 3. (l) Acts 17. 25.  
(m) Prov. 23. 26.

note  
 outward Gestures, and will not open his Eyes to discover the Truths which would save him from Damnation. My Heart is oppressed with Grief, Sir, to see all the World perish, and I cannot help it, because they will not receive the Truth. I am very far from desiring to leave my Neighbour out of disdain: But I am obliged to leave him because he will not be converted to the Truth, and the Holy Spirit layes, We ought not to speak that which does not profit. I see the Vice of all Men clear as the Sun, and I do not think that one can be saved in the State in which they are at present: And yet I cannot save them by my Conversation: Because they make not a good use of it. If I declare their Vices in particular, they are ill satisfied, or at least, they would cover and excuse them: Which is evidence enough that they will not amend them; and if I point out the Vices indirectly, or in general, then no Body will take it to himself, but will excuse himself by some Formality or Reasoning; and if any one lay them to Heart for a Time, Men and Business do quickly banish these good Purposes: And so nothing is put in practice: My Time is lost: And my Words are rendered useless, whereas I would be profiting something in conversing with God. Behold these are the Causes and Reasons why I will remain alone, not to conceal the Light: For I would have it Lighted for all the World, and I know not a more perfect Contentment in this Life, than the Meeting and Society of many Hearts united in Jesus Christ; as also I know nothing more uneasy than the Conjunction of Persons of contrary Wills: For I cannot change for them, and they will not change to follow me. This is the Combat.

I said to her, *That at least some would change to follow her, and to save their Souls.*

She said: Sir, You would be greatly astonished to see the way the World would take to change. Every one, forsooth, would resign his Will to God, provided he govern it according to their own Inclinations. God must accommodate himself to them, and they will not accommodate themselves to God. Even so, many would indeed follow me, if so be withal they may follow also their own Will. Which cannot be done: For he who follows it, (n)

(n) Rom. 8. 8.

is the Enemy of God, and if I am his Friend, how could I dwell with those who are his Enemies without a continual Constraint, Contradiction and Debate? All their Actions proceeding from this Self-love would be blameable. If I do not reprove them, I am unfaithful to God; and if I reprove them, I become their Enemy; and withal they will not amend, but will become rather worse, applying themselves to remark if they can find any defects in my Actions for a Revenge; and if they do not find any, they will endeavour at least to despise my Intentions by measuring them according to their Line, and interpreting them according to their Sentiments. And thus they will offend God, and trouble my Repose without any profit. Therefore I foreseeing this, would do very ill to associate with any Body, unless I had assurance before-hand that they would resign themselves truly to God: For else this would be to render my self a Slave, and others miserable, without any Contentment: And as God takes his delight and pleasure with Souls whose Wills are united to his, so he thrusts behind him those who are not in the Unity of his Divine Will; even so ought I to thrust away from me those who will not truly resign their Wills to that of God; because it is a kind of Martyrdom to live together bodily being divided in Will: As it would be a Paradise of Delights to live with Persons who have their Wills equally resigned to that of God. Which makes the true Paradise and perfect Contentment: For God (o) and these Souls would be but one and the same Thing.

I said to her, *That she ought to associate her self with sincere Persons; and that her Company would be of great Advantage to them for attaining to this Resignation to God.*

She said: It is true, Sir, in case their Will were truly good: But all that I remark in these Persons who would follow me and be saved, is nothing but *Wouldings*, not *absolute Wills*. They say, they would be converted, they would follow me, and be resigned to God; while in effect they do neither the one nor the other before God: Because these *Wouldings* proceed only from their own Will. They would be converted, being afraid of Damnation;



They would follow me that they may be saved; and resign themselves to God only in Word; or as long as the Will of God goes along with theirs. Lo this is the good Will that I have experienced in those who would follow me, and even at present I know no other: For I perceive very often that they aim yet at their own Interest, Honour, or Pleasures. So that if they were with me, I would reprove all their Actions, none excepted: Which would be very irksome to me, and troublesome to them, yea even insupportable. For so long as they are not truly resigned to God, they live still according to their Natural Senses, which will not suffer Reproofs; and Nature is so Proud, that it will not acknowledge its Fault, nor suffer disesteem, presuming to be more wise and accomplished than its equals; so that all that I should do to these Persons, would only be to disquiet and vex them, because they are so in love with their Vices and Imperfections, that they even despise those that do not follow them: So that I should live in a continual Constraint among others, for I could not speak according to my Sentiments: For they are not capable of them; and I could not shew them their Faults, because they presume to be as wise as I, neither could I be profitable in their Company, when they will not follow the Spirit that guides me, but every one abounds in their own Sense, and will not submit themselves to the Truth, without which Submission no Body can attain to this Resignation. The necessity of this Dependance must be known, or else they will not subject themselves to it: For if they see not the necessity of doing this, every one will believe he is in a State of Salvation in whatsoever Condition he be; and thus every one will insensibly perish; and my Company could not save them: And since God has given me Liberty, wherefore should I continue a Slave to Men, when I cannot be profitable to them for the Glory of God?

I said to her, *That God was pleased to undergo the Slavery of our humane Nature for the Salvation of his Creatures, and that she ought to be furnished with the same Spirit that Jesus Christ had.*

She said: Sir, By his Grace I am so, and I do so earnestly desire to see all Men saved, that I would willingly dye for every one of them, if I had as many Lives: But I am well assured that my Conversation, my Words, and my Life,

Life cannot save them if they do not resign themselves of their own free Will to the Will of God. Though all the (p) Saints, both Angels and Men pray together, they will never procure the Salvation of so much as one Soul, unless it resign its Will to God. For this is a necessary Thing : The Saints may indeed pray, and the Angels sollicit, and all Men help any who has withdrawn from God to obtain this Dependence upon him : But all this will avail him nothing if he do not of his own Free-will truly yield up his Will to God, and deny his Self-will. Very few comprehend this : Nevertheless, this is an Eternal Truth that will never change : For God created Man only for this.

I said to her, *That I my self did not well comprehend this Necessity of Depending upon God ; entreating that she would explain it to me.*

*She said :* Sir, Be attentive, and consider my Discourse well: Perhaps it will give you some Light in this Matter. Consider first that God said, (q) *Let us make Man after our Image and Likeness* : This was not said in vain, but it had its full effect, and Man (r) was made after the Image and Likeness of God. Consider a little, Sir, wherein you shall find the Likeness of God in Man ? It is not in his Natural Body : For God is a pure Spirit ; and has nothing that resembles a Body : Neither can this Likeness to God, be found in the Animal Soul of Man ; because this Animal Soul has no more than the Beasts, so far is it from resembling God ; for it extends no farther than to give Life to the Body for a certain Time ; whereas the Life of God is Eternal, without Beginning, and without End ; and a Temporal Thing cannot resemble an Eternal. Therefore this Likeness of Man to God, cannot be found in the Animal Soul of Man, no more than in his Body : And if one would seek for it in the Faculties of the Soul, which are the Memory, the Understanding, the Will, we shall find that these Three Faculties have no resemblance to God : For they are imperfect and limited : Which God cannot be : Our Memory is very frail, and sometimes does not remember on the Morrow what we did the preceding

(p) Jer. 14. 11. & 15. 1. (q) Gen. 1. 26. (r) Gen. 1. 27.

Day: Our Understanding is in like manner subject to great defects, taking False Things often for True: And our Will is sometimes so insolent, that if it were not bridled by Reason, it would often precipitate us into irreparable Mischiefs. All which Things are in nothing like to God, since he is without any Imperfections or Defects, perfect in all Things, and without Bounds or Limits, whereas the Faculties of our Soul are all limited, as the Faculties of the Souls of Beasts are, who have sometimes a better Memory than Men: For if a Dog or a Horse be ill used in any Place, he will remember it for a long time: They have also a Will to do, and to leave what they are naturally enclined to, though it be bounded and limited as well as that of Man; for neither the one nor the other can put their Will in Execution, because they have not the power to do all that they can desire: Which God can do in all Things. By which we see that Man is not in any of these Things like to God: For his Understanding is not capable of comprehending any thing but what he sees, or hears, as are the Beasts also. So that by the Faculties of the Soul of Man we cannot perceive that he is like to God, since he has an Eternal Memory, an unlimited Understanding, and an unchangeable Will: To which the Faculties of the Souls of Men are not at all to be compared. Wherein then can it be said that God has made Man like to himself? Search into it with me, Sir: You will find that he is like to God in nothing, but in his Free-will: And as God has this Free Power over all Things, so he gave to Man this Free Power over his own Will, that he might dispose of it as it should please him; in this alone, he is the Image of God: Because this Liberty is to him Eternal and Independent: As God is Sovereign, independent from all Things: So Man is Sovereign of his own Free-will, independent from all Things, except that he acknowledge that this Liberty is given him of God, that he neither has nor holds it of himself: As God has and holds all Things of himself: Otherwise, Man is a Deity by his Free-will, for by it he can do and leave any thing: For God (s) never retakes what he has once given, neither will he ever retake the Free-will of Man; but will let them enjoy it to all Eternity, as being an Eternal Gift:

(s) Rom. 11. 29.

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It will never end as long as God shall be God: Man shall have his free Will, both during this Life, and also in the other in Paradise or Hell. He shall have through all this Divine Quality of a Free-will which God gave him when he created him. He shall not take it from him in Paradise; because this is the duly quality that Man has, whereby he is capable of being united to God, all the rest being only bounded and natural, are not at all capable of approaching a supream Deity.

## The One and Twentieth Conference.

*Speaks of the Free-will of Man; in which alone he is like to God: That God has given it to Man for ever: That he has annexed to it all his future Graces: And that never any Good nor any Evil will befall any Body, in Time or in Eternity, but by Free-will, according as we shall yield it up or not, to a Dependence upon and Resignation to God.*

I said to her, That we had been taught, That Man had indeed Free will when he was created: But that by Sin it was so lost, that he could not use it any longer to do good.

She said: Sir, Free-will shall never be diminished, but will continue alwayes such as it was given to the first Man in his Creation: For God can never repent of the Works (t) that he has made. If Man feel that he is unable to do good, this is not the defect of his Free-will, which remains to him still entire; but the defect is, that his Sins have taken from him the power to do good, by (u) the Blindness they have brought into his Soul, which hinders the Discovery of the Means how to depart from evil and to do good. The Soul being blinded by its Sin, lost the Light of Truth; and in this darkness cannot find the way

(t) Rom. II. 29. (u) Eph. 4. 18.



to return to good. This she attributes to the Weakness of her Free-will, flattering her self to excuse her own Wickedness, or indirectly to accuse God that he does not give her sufficient Grace to do well. Which is a great Calumny against God, who never bestowed so many Graces upon any Creature as he did on Man, having made him alone a depending Deity, because he would have one kind of Creature with whom he might take his delight<sup>(u)</sup>: Therefore he endued him with this Divine Liberty, that his Delight might be compleat on the side of both the Lovers. This is not a small Grace which would be sufficient to enable a Man to do well. For if all Men whatsoever would return to a Dependance upon God, they would certainly recover the same Grace and Liberty that Adam had before his Sin: Because God continues still in the same Will to take his Delight with Men, that he had when he created them: Because he never (*x*) changes: For he is immutable. And if Man do well, or ill, it is for himself; but God will never deny his Graces, because he is alwayes good, tho' Man be wicked.

*I admired this Discourse*, That God would grant to any Man whatsoever the same Graces that he gave to Adam in his Creation, provided he resigned his Will to that of God, asking her how this was possible since the Curse of Sin?

*She said*: Sir, It ought not to be doubted. He is the same God, and we are the same Creatures, come from Adam, and reputed as if we were he. If of our own free choice (*y*) we would yeild up the Free-will that God has given us in our power; he would at the same instant put us again in the state of Innocence, and would govern us till we departed again from a Dependance on him: In which we would still be free: Because God never keeps any Body by force, letting our Free-will still Act as to good or evil, as we will dispose of it. For if God did Act upon us independently from our Will, he would certainly save all Men, and would not permit so much as one to be damned: Because he created (*a*) them all for Salvation, and he will never take from any Body the Graces which he gave to

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(u) Prov. 8. 31. (x) Jam. 1. 17. (y) Isa. 58. 13, 14.  
(z) John 6. 67. (a) 4 Esdr. 8. 59, 60.

*Adam.* If they abuse them it will be their Unhappiness, and their own Fault, and not that of Grace: For it shall still be (b) given to the good and to the wicked, even to the last Day of Judgment: God will alwayes be with Men by his Grace. But then the season of Grace shall be past: Therefore will he say to the wicked, (c) *Go ye Cursed, depart from me.* If he had not been with them till then, he could not have thrust them away from him, since they would have been so from the Time they became wicked. God should have no occasion to have thrust them from him this Last Day, if they had been separated from his Grace during all the time they lived in their Sins. It is said indeed, that the Grace of God is lost by sinning: Not that this Grace is taken from Man on Gods part; but only that Man, of his Free-will, will not subject himself to God, but will be at his own disposal: And by this Mean, he falls into all sort of Evils, from which he should be delivered, if he would yield up to God this Free-will, repenting that he himself had used it. If you please, Sir, to look into the Lives of the Saints, you will find that many of them walked on the Waters, went over burning Coals, for an Evidence, that God gives to those who resign themselves to his Will the same Graces he gave to *Adam* when he created him; and that the Elements render their Duty to Man, when he renders his Duty to God; that the Fire only enlightens and warms him, without blackening or burning him: Because the Malignity that is in those Elements, as in other Things, did never cleave to them, till Man would no longer acknowledge a DEPENDANCE upon God. All the Elements, with the other Creatures subjected to Man, were obliged by Right of Justice, to quit also the Dependance they had upon Man, since he had quitted the Dependance that he had upon his God, and not to submit themselves any longer to Man but by force, since he would not submit but by force unto God. Which is a brutish Obedience: Though these new Casuists call the Resignation in some Sufferings which befall Man, Vertue and Merit: In which there can be no more Merit, than the giving Oats to Horses when they have rid well by Prick of Spur: So the Man who has no

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(b) *Prov.* 1. 20—33. (c) *Mat.* 25. 41.

other Vertue but to resign his Will to that of God when he cannot escape Sufferings: and is forced to fall into some Misfortune, can merit no other thing but the Temporal Repose and Quiet which his Resignation will give him: Because it does not proceed from this that he will depend upon God, but from the necessity he is in to suffer them by force. The Spirits of Men are strangely blinded now; for they bring so many Means to cleave to God, that they know not which to pitch upon as the best. One sayes, the Churches and Sacraments must be frequented; and another, that the Body must be mortified; another bids subject the Will to some Man, or enter into a Religious Order; and a Thousand other such Things: Nevertheless, there is but one Thing only necessary, which is, to Resign **OUR WILL to THAT OF GOD**: By which we have fulfilled all: For God having the disposal of our Will, (d) he will guide it in all that is most perfect and accomplished.

I asked her, *If God could not lead our Will in things that are good without our delivering up our selves to him, since all belongs to him, and all good comes immediately from him?*

She said: It is true, Sir, all good comes from God; and there can be no other good but he. All the (e) good that Men can do, must come from him; but know this, that since the first Graces which he gave Man in creating him, he will give him no other (f) but as far as Man of his Free-will shall depend upon his God, and no farther. If he will wholly depend upon him, he shall have Graces in abundance; and if he will onely in part depend upon God, he shall still have Graces in part in proportion to his Dependance. For Example: One will depend upon God as to his Health; and assuredly he will suffer his Infirmities and Diseases with Patience: Which will be the Grace he has merited by yielding up his Will to God as to his Health: Another will submit to God as to Temporal Goods; and he shall have the Grace of Poverty of Spirit: Another will submit to God in the Matter of his Honour; and he shall have the Grace to suffer Contempt willingly: And so of the rest. Since God gave the first Graces to

(d) Psal. 73. 23, 24. (e) Jam. 1. 17. (f) Isa. 1. 19.

*Adam*, he will not encrease them to him but so far as his Free-will shall be subjected to God, and no farther: Because he has shewn the effect of his Goodness and Almighty Power towards Man in creating him so full of Graces and Prerogatives, taking him out of *Nothing*, where he could have merited nothing. God having absolute Dominion over this *Nothing*, bestows on him all the Graces that he pleased, because he found no resistance; and so he lead his Will to good, having engraven in his Soul a good Inclination, and a reasonable Understanding to know the Dependance he had upon God, from whom he saw he had received Being, and all Things. An Instinct to good, and the Love of his God, were engraven in the Marrow of his Bones. These are the Qualities that God gave Man before he was capable of resisting God: But since he resisted so many Graces, and would rerake to himself the Free-will that God had given him, to use it independently from God, he has lost his Graces, and obliged him not to bestow more upon him, but as far as he will yield up his own Will to God, having by this Mean bounded the Grace of God at his Will. Not that Man is capable of regulating or bounding the Graces of God, who is still absolute Sovereign of all Things; but because it was his absolute Desire to give to Man his Free-will (*b*), which alone renders him capable of being united to God: And if he had received only a Limited Will, he would have had no Divine Quality for God to take his Delight with him: For that Two Things may find Contentment together, there must still be a Proportion or Sympathy between them. A Horse cannot be contented or pleased with a piece of Iron; nor a Dog with Marble, nor a Swine with a Precious Stone: Because all these Things are disproportioned to the Nature of these Beasts, who cannot Love nor take Pleasure in Objects to unlike their Natures. Even so God cannot take his Delight with any Creature of a bounded Will, he being an infinite God, There must be in Man some infinite Quality by which he may unite himself to God: And if he had not given him this Will eternally Free, Man should have had nothing in him sympathetic with God, who nevertheless would make a

(g) *Deut.* 30. 14. (b) *Psal.* 110. 3.



Creature with whom he might take (i) his pleasure : Therefore he gave him this Divine and Reasonable Soul with (k) an Eternal (l) Liberty, which shall never be taken from him, do Man what he pleases : Because God never changes his Decrees (m) ; and if he forced Man to good after he had given him this Liberty, he should constrain that which he would have to be free, and should reverse the Order that he had so wisely Established, and should take from Man the most Precious Thing he had received : For laying aside this Free-will, he would be but like the Beasts. Therefore God will never direct our Will, but when we shall yield it up to him : though he be Almighty.

*I entreated her to tell me, How our Will shall be eternal ; and if we shall even be free to do evil in Paradise, or good in Hell ?*

*She said :* No, Sir, we can never do evil in Paradise : Because there we shall enjoy the continual Presence of God, during which we can never sin, though it were even in this Miserable Life : As long as our Soul abides there in the Presence of God, it can no more sin than if it had no Liberty : And if some Saints have fallen into Sins, this has certainly been when they have strayed from this Presence of God ; and during this wandering, they might sin : Because the Objects of Evil were yet present with them, and they resting on them, might easily fall. But in Paradise our Spirit can no more wander, or be distracted from God ; because he shall be continually and eternally with us, sensibly and visibly, without any interruption ; neither can we be diverted by evil Objects, because all that shall be in Paradise shall be holy ; and all the Blessed shall visibly and sensibly possess God, so that we shall see God in every one of them. All these Things will render us impeccable ; and though we shall still have Free-will, yet it shall never be led to evil in the midst of such Good ; and God to whom we shall entirely yield it up, will straitly (o) unite it to his own, so that it can no more be led to evil than that of God is, for it shall be

(i) Prov. 8. 31. (k) Rom. 11. 29. (l) Eccl. 15. 14--17. (m) Jam. 1. 17. (n) Psal. 16. 8. (o) John 17. 21, 23.

united to his in so indissoluble a Bond of Love that it will be impossible to separate it for so much as one Moment, they being no longer but one and the same Thing. Thus shall our Free-will rule in Paradise. Even so in Hell our Will shall never be bounded; because God having given it free, it shall eternally persist in its Liberty: But whereas this Will would not submit to God in this Life, but was led to evil of our own Will, and since Death, remains in the same desire of doing evil; we continue in these desires to all Eternity, without ever having the Will to do good: Because we are farther removed than ever from all sorts of good Objects, but joyned and attended with all sorts evils. The continual Presence of Devils prompts our Wills continually and without intermission to do Evil; and the Company of so great a number of damned Souls who use their Free-will to do all manner of evil, doth continually draw us to imitate and follow them: So that having never any thought towards good, we can never have the Will to do good, even as the Devils cannot, who have also retained their Free-will, which serves continually to encrease their Evils, their Will being engaged to persist in doing all the evil they can: For this cause they tempt Men so strongly that they may have them in their damnable Company: Not that they hope the number of the Damned will ease their Pains, on the contrary, they well know, that it will encrease them the more; but because their Free-will is bent to evil; and this Free-will being eternal, is eternally bent to do evil: For a free Quality, such as Free-will is, will always act in good or evil; according to the Object towards which it bends. And their Evils are so far from being bounded by Damnation that they encrease eternally; because of their eternal Will, which cannot be bounded. This Free-will which is bent to evil, has given a Malignity to all the Creatures, which Malignity shall remain also (p) eternally: Because this Malignant Free-will, being a Divine and Eternal Quality, of necessity makes its Works eternal: So that these miserable Souls shall have upon them all the Malignity of all the Creatures to all Eternity, as being the Work of their Hands.

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(p) *Mat. 25. 46.*

I asked her, *If the Devils had also their Free-will; and if God could not bound them?* She said: Yes, Sir, the Devils shall have their Free-will to all Eternity as well as Men: For God (g) never retracts what he has once given. The Angels were intelligent Beings capable of being united to God, which Capacity could not be given them but by a Divine Quality; which is that Eternal Liberty, without which they could not have Sympathy with God: For Angels as well as Men are but simple Creatures, who can have no proportion with their Creator. Therefore he has given both to the one and the other of these Creatures a Divine Soul and an Eternal Free-will; that by these Divine Qualities, they might have a Capacity of Loving an Eternal God. Now the wretched Inclination of this Free-will resisting the Designs that God had in blessing them so advantageously with Divine Gifts, would needs use this Liberty to apply it to the doing evil instead of following the good for which this Liberty was given them. Notwithstanding, God will never retake those Divine Qualities that he has once given them: The Divine Soul, and Eternal Liberty, will never end. For all that is Divine is Eternal; and God cannot bound them, because he cannot be changeable in his Gifts, nor can he take away what he has been pleased to give. If it be Established among Men to lay no longer claim to a Thing given, how much more ought we to hold that God lays no claim to the Free-will of Devils and Men, to whom he voluntarily gave it. This Gift only makes the Souls of Men and also those of Devils to be immortal: For otherwise both the one and the other would have been reduced to nothing as soon as they sinned; for God being the Source of all good, can never do evil, nor give eternal Pains: But the great Blessings which he gave his Creatures in giving them a Divine Soul and Free-will, have served the Devil for his Eternal Misery, as they will do to wicked Men, who if they will apply this Divine Liberty to do Evil, they shall bring upon themselves all the evil they shall do, which will be eternal, as proceeding from their eternal Will. If Man had had only an Animal Soul, and a Limited Will, their Evils would have ended with themselves, as those of the Beasts do, who do evil or good by their

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(g) Rom. 11. 29.

bounded Will; and all their Works, such as they are, do end with their Animal Soul, which is nothing but transient and temporal. If Men had not a Divine Soul and an Eternal Will, they would wholly do the same: For they are not in Qualities different from the Beasts, except by their Divine Qualities, which render them Immortal and Eternal; For since God established them in a Divine Soul and Will, they can never end, being Eternities, as God, except that they had a Beginning, and God was incomprehensibly without Beginning, and to all Eternity.

I asked her, *If the Souls of the Blessed in Paradise could do as much good as they would; and in like manner, if the Souls of Devils and of the Damned could do as much evil as they would.*

She said: Yes, Sir, For their Wills have no Bounds, neither the one nor the other. Have you never heard say, that in Paradise there are infinite Goods? That is to say, That those Free-wills which are in Paradise will never cease to do good, even infinitely: For there can be no Barrenness with God; but a production of continual Goods, which shall never have an end: Thus the Blessed shall produce all the Good that their Free-will shall desire. And in like manner the Wills of Devils and Damned Men shall produce as much Evil as their Free-will shall desire. They shall not be able to do evil according to their Wills to the Men yet Living on the Earth; much less to the Blessed in Heaven: Because these can resist them by their Free-will, which is inclined to good: The Free-will of the Good having as much power to do well, as the Free-will of the Wicked to do evil. They are both free to do in themselves all the good and evil that they will; but the Evil cannot take hold of the good Wills of others no more than the good of the Good can profit the Wicked; and the evil of the Wicked cannot hurt the Good; but in so far as both the one and the other give the Consent of their Free-will: Which indeed may be done during this Life: Because Man is yet in an uncertain State of Salvation or Damnation; and even to his Last Breath his Will may be led to good and to evil. Therefore it is said, that (r) the least in Paradise is greater than the most



holy among Men; because of the uncertainty of their Blessedness; they being still in danger of consenting to the evil Suggestion of the Devil, or the Example of some wicked Man, being here alwayes in perill for we are still encompassed with our (s) Enemies, who do all the evil they please by their Free-will. But we may also resist it by ours: For neither Devils nor any wicked Men whosoever can ever have power over our Free-will: For it will still be left free to us, and we may consent to or reject the Temptations of the Devil and wicked Men, they not being able to hurt us without our Consent. We cannot hinder them to tempt us, since they have their Liberty, and they cannot hinder us to resist them, for we in like manner have our Free-will. But the Souls of Devils and the Damned do certainly as much evil as they can, because they have lost all occasions of doing good, and cannot now have any good Will, for they have destin'd it to evil: But the Souls of the Blessed cannot be molested by the Devils and wicked Men: For their Will is absolutely destinated to good, which destination is an opposition to all sort of Evil. So that the (t) good of the Blessed cannot touch the evils of the Miserable, nor these on the other hand the goods of the Blessed: For every one has made a choice of good and evil for Eternity; and cannot repent of it, since they are passed out of this World. For whosoever (u) State Man shall dye, he shall abide in it: If he dye in the eternal Resolution of good, he shall do good to all Eternity; and if he dye in the Resolution of doing evil, he shall do evil to all Eternity. And he must look for no other Sentence but what he has made up for himself by his own Free-will.

I said to Henry, That many holy Persons were sometimes abused by Devils and wicked Men, though they had not contributed to Evil by their Free-will: And it is ordinarily said, that the Devil has no more Power than God gives him; nor yet wicked Men.

She said: No body in the World has hitherto understood the Works of God; but every one judges of his Works according to their short Sight: But now that we are

(s) 1 Pet. 5. 8. (t) Luke 16. 25, 26. (u) Eccles.

11. 3.

arrived

arrived at the Fulfillment of Time, (x) he will give the Knowledge of his Procedure as to Men. You shall be perswaded of this, if you take good heed to my Discourse, and peruse a little the Holy Fathers who spoke of the Grace of God, and of all his Works. You must confess that the Discourses of a Child are much more clear and intelligible than all the Doctrines of these great Men: Because the Hour is now come that all these Things shall be fully manifested, and nothing shall be any longer hid from Men of the Designs that God has concerning them. You tell me that many Saints have been abused by the Devil and the Wicked, without having contributed to it by their Free-will: Which is true. For God holding the Will of these Saints in his Power, because they had yielded up their Free-will to God, he enclines their Will to good or necessary Sufferings. Nor that God gives the Devil, or the Wicked, this Power to abuse his Servants, by his independent Permission, out of his absolute Power; but he permits (y) the Devil and the Wicked to tempt the Saints (z) with their Consent: For they having yielded up their Free-will into Gods Hand, he leads it alwayes to good. And seeing that Temptations and Persecution were good for some of the said Saints, he enclined their Will to desire them, and willingly to suffer them: Though in the sensual part they felt some Repugnance, the Divine Soul and Free-will were (a) joyfull and contented with them, seeing these Evils befall them by the Will of God, to which theirs was united and conformable: And thus they suffered with their Free-will: Not that God permits the Devil to do evil to follow his Malice: For he can never consent (b) to any evil; but he permits him for the purging or honouring of his Servants, who desire with all their Heart to be purged or honoured that they may be made so much the more agreeable to God when he permits these Sufferings (c) as the true Means of their Perfection: For when there is no need of them for their Perfection, the Evils which Devils and wicked Men would do them cannot touch them, as it has

(x) Jer. 31. 24. (y) Job 1. 12. & 2. 6. (z) Job 1. 21. & 2. 10. (a) 2 Cor. 12. 10. (b) Psal. 5. 5. Syr. Ps. 21. (c) 2 Cor. 12. 9.

often fallen out that Poyson (d), or other Mischiefs done to Saints, has done them no hurt. To shew that the Devil and the Wicked are still free on their part to do evil, without any other Petition from God but the Free-will that he had once given them; but that the Free-will of the good may alwayes resist them, and hinder any from coming near them, except it be expedient for the Glory of God, or their own Perfection: Then though the Soul abandoned to God should not see the evils that the Wicked would do it, and should not formally oppose it self to them; God who still (e) watches for the good of his true Children, will never permit any evil to befall them, but what is expedient for them: Not that he will bound the Will of those Malignant ones that they may not be able to do evil to the good; but he will move the Wills of the good to withdraw from them, or to shun the Places and Occasions where the evil may befall them, or he will give so lively a Faith, that Poison or other Evils shall not take hold to hurt his Servants, whom he (f) keeps as the Apple of his Eyes. Thus it is that God carries as to us, doing alwayes good, and never consenting to evil, nor yet limiting the Free-will that he gave to Angels, and Devils, and Men, both good and bad, every one shall enjoy it to all Eternity without hindrance, either in the good or in the wicked. Therefore on all occasions we judge amiss of the Works of God, when we believe that he permits (g) evil in any whosoever. This proceeds from our ignorance of the Excellency of the free choice and the Dignity of the Free-will that God has given to Men; imagining that he governs them as Slaves, by force, or by his absolute Authority: Which is not at all so. For if he gave to all Creatures that are subjected to Man, when he created them, an amiable Inclination to acquiesce in and follow alwayes the Will of Man, without constraint, that he might serve him with agreeable Delight; wherefore should he not incline Man to follow the Will of God freely and without constraint?

(d) Mark 16. 18. (e) Psal. 33. 18. & 121. 4. (f) Psal. 17. 8. (g) Ecel. 15. 21.

## The Twentieth and Second Conference,

*Speaks of the Disputes that are about Free-will and Predestination.*

I said to her, *That this Point of the Free-will of Man was debated: That all acknowledged he was created in full Liberty; but that since his Sin he could no longer do good without a particular Grace from God.*

*She said:* Sir, I believe I have told you many times, that God never changes: Whether Men sin or not, he is not therefore moved. Free-will has remained with Men since his Sin (*b*) as well as before it. If he deprived not the Devils nor damned Souls of it, why should he take it from Man since his Sin, especially since he would pardon him, and yet take his Delight with him? Must he not after his Sin have had the same Divine Soul and Free-will as before (*i*)? For else he could never more have been led to good, nor be united to God if this Divine Quality were taken from him or diminished. What more particular Grace could be given him than to let him enjoy his Free-will after his Sin? A greater Grace could not be given him than this Divine Liberty, with which he might accomplish his Penitence, and do all other kind of good: For if his Penitence had not been accompanied with this Free-will, it could never have satisfied an offended God. This Divine Quality was needful to satisfy for the Offence done to his Divinity: And without having the Liberty to do good, by what means could he recover the Grace of God? If God had not left Man to his Liberty to do good, never any Person would have been saved, neither Adam, nor any others: For without this Liberty of doing good Adam could never have repented, nor all Men who have fallen in him. For none who are born since would have been free to do good, or to beg the Grace of God for fulfilling their Penitence, but every one would have been bent to Evil; since they had no other Liberty but to do evil: Of necessity they must have given themselves to

(*b*) Deut. 30. 19. (*i*) Psal. 110. 3.



evil, since they would not have had the Liberty to do good. I am an Enemy to all these Disputes; and would wish that all Men would submit their Judgment to the Works of God.

I said to her, That these Disputes were not ended; but many held that God had decreed one Masse of Elect, and another of Reprobates, and that it will fall out so, do Men what they please.

She said: How cruel is it to hear, Sir! That God should destinate a Masse of Reprobates! This is as if they would say, that God is wicked from the Creation of Men; for if he were not he would not have created a Masse of Reprobates to be miserable to all Eternity do what they will. This necessity of being damned reflects upon God. For if he had not created them to Damnation, they could not be miserable to all Eternity: And God could not create them for Damnation but out of pure Malice; setting aside this, he would rather have left them in nothing, than to create them for Reprobation. Truly, Sir, a greater Blasphemy cannot be uttered against God than this; for it shocks all his Qualities of Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth, which are his Eternal Qualities (q) without which he can never do any thing. If he had created one part of Men for Damnation, he should not have done a just thing; since these Reprobates did not merit Damnation before they had a Being, and could not in Justice be Reprobated without having deserved it. Neither could God exercise his Goodness in determining the Damnation of any: Since this Damnation is the greatest Evil in the World: How should he be good in doing so great evil to Men? And how should he be true in reprobating those of whom he sayes, that (m) his delight is to be with them since they are the Children of Men? He must want Judgment and Reason who believes that God created a Masse of damned. The Superstition of Christians must have invented this blaspheming against God to authorise their Authority, and to shew that God also uses Authority over Men as they will use it over their like: This is against Truth: For God is not partial, nor will he ever use Passion towards any. All these Words and Dis-

(q) Psal. 33. 4, 5. Psal. 89. 15. (m) Prov. 8. 31.

putes are so many Names of *Blasphemists*, of which (n) *the Whore in the Revelation* is full: For I do not believe that any other Sect or Nation sayes that Reprobation is determined of God.

I asked her, *What I ought to believe in this Matter, that I might not blaspheme against God?*

She said: Sir, We ought to go to the Original of Man, and see in his Beginning, how he was created. God took not two Masses of Earth to create the one of them for Salvation, and the other for Damnation: But only one Masse of Earth, with which he created one Man only, for Salvation (o), creating in him all the Men that ever were or shall be: He created them all in general in the State of Innocence and Salvation, and for this end gave abundance of Graces, both Spiritual and Bodily, and that equally to all, without exception of any; giving to all a Divine Soul and a Free-will, that they might be capable to do all manner of good: And seeing God created all Men in Adam, he could not have created any for Reprobation; but all for Salvation, none excepted. This being so, as it truly is, no Body could be created for Damnation, as they would very unreasonably make it be believed: For if some must be necessarily Damned or Saved, they should not have Free-will: Which none can deny: For all Men received a Divine Soul and Free-will in Adam, who was the first of the Elect, and after him all his Posterity. For God never will'd (p) that any should perish, but that they Live. And seeing he wils that they Live, how could he create them for Reprobation; since there can never be any Contradiction in God? Never believe, Sir, that any was created for Damnation: But if any damn themselves, it is (q) contrary to the Designs of God, and because (r) they will needs use their Free-will to apply it to evil: For if they followed the Will of God, and the good (s) Impression that he has given them, they could never damn or destroy themselves, even though they had sinned: Because God desires not (t) the Death of a Sinner, but that he should be Converted and Live. By which we see that God does not Reprobate the Sinner more than the Just;

(n) *Rev.* 17. 3. (o) *Wisd.* 11. 25. 4 *Esd.* 8. 59.  
(p) *2-Pet.* 3. 9. (q) *Prov.* 1. 25. (r) *Psal.* 81. 12, 13, 14.  
(s) *Bru.* 4. 23. (t) *Ezek.* 33. 11.

but desires that all should be Saved, and none Reprobated, as they Maintain. But Men now (*u*) being full of Vices and Passions of Love and Hatred, without any thing of Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth, they would fain give Authority to their Malice by making a God (*x*) to go before them in the Matter of their Passions. And as they in taking Dominion over Men, do according to their Inclinations disgrace or favour them; they would make God as partial, as they know they are themselves, saying, that he damns some and saves others according to his Pleasure. Which will never be. For God is no more subject to Passions than to change. We ought always to come to the Truth, and retake the Original and the Essence of Things, without amusing our selves with the Discourses of Men, who say and do according to their Advantages; and if they are not enclined to use their Free-will aright, they would fain lay the blame on God, saying, *They have not his Grace, or, They are not of the Number of those who are predestinated to his Salvation*: Which makes a great many perish through Sloth, or Negligence, saying, If they are Electd they shall certainly be saved; and if they are Reprobated, they shall certainly be damned, do what they will. This is contrary to the Truth. For God did not create Man a kind of limited Creature. And though it seems sometimes as if God determined good or evil Fortunes, yet nevertheless it is not true. For he will not determine against the Free-will of Man, who shall still be capable of using it well or ill. But because our Understanding is bounded, it can comprehend only the Accidents it sees, without discovering their Sources or Originals. For Example: We see a Man become poor though he Labour, and is no Prodigal. We say immediately; it is God that afflicts him by evil Fortune; while it is for want of Foresight or Management in his Affairs.

I said to her, *That it was not believed that God created Man for Damnation; but that God Reprobated Man after his Sin, which had undone them all.*

She said: Sir, You will find this absurd: For if all Men were created in Adam, they are all (*y*) also fallen in Adam, and consequently there could not be a Masse of Predestinated after Sin: Because all in general were Re-

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(*u*) 2 Tim. 3. 2, 3, &c. (*x*) Exod. 31. 1. (*y*) Rom. 5. 12. reprobated

probated and Damned by the same Sin of *Adam*: He having sinned with his Free will, there was no longer any thing sound in it: For if he had not given a full Consent of his Will to Sin, none would have been Damned, because of the Imperfection of his full Consent; as we do not commit a Mortal Sin when our Will does not give full Consent to Evil; and no Body doubts but *Adam* gave the full consent of his Will in disobeying God; and consequently he is damned, and all Men with him, none excepted: For he could not have a divided Will, nor one part sound, and another damn'd: Because there was but one Man only, and he had but one Will, in which was included the Will of all Men that should ever arise from him. So that God could not pitch in him upon one Masse of Reprobates, and one of Saved: Because there was no longer Salvation in him after his Sin, nor in all other Men his Posterity. All were reduced into this damned Masse, without any exception: And as none could be damned before Sin, so none could be saved after it: Because in *Adam* all Men in general were contained, who have still shared in his Happiness and Miseries, his Favours and Disgraces, his Pleasures and his Penitence: All Men being inseparably united to the will of *Adam*, the Father of all living.

I asked her, *How it could be that some Men are damned and some saved, since there was so strait an union between the Will of Adam and that of other Men?*

*She said*: This comes to pass, Sir, when every Man comes to the use of Reason. He goes out of the Power and Will of *Adam*, and is put into his own full Liberty, as *Adam* was at his Creation, with this difference only, that Men have in them the Malignity of Sin: Which *Adam* had not when he was created; but only an Inclination to good: As to the rest, all Men in general, are put, (when they are capable of Reason) into the same Estate wherein *Adam* was created, with the same Divine Soul, wholly free and reasonable, capable of being led to good or evil, as *Adam* was. But that some are saved or damned, is not by any Necessity or Predestination; but only by every ones Free-will, who are led to good or to evil according to (a) the Choice they make of the one or the other: Because on Gods part, Man is left free and

(z) *Mat.* 23. 37. (a) *Deut.* 30. 19. *Isa.* 66. 3, 4.



entire, as he was before Sin : For God never changes his Works. He has not for sin changed any thing in the Earth, nor in the Heavens, nor in the Elements, nor in the Beasts, nor in the other Creatures, but has continued them all such as he created them, without any change, but Sin has brought Malignity upon each of them, whereas before the said Sin all Things were good; (b) without any evil. Even so God has changed nothing in Man since his Sin. He remains entire in all his Qualities, both Bodily and Spiritual, except that by Sin he has contracted a Malignity (c), and an Inclination to evil : Which before he had not, but a bent and inclination to all sort of good. Behold this is the only change that Sin made in Man, without his being necessitated to evil, far less predestinated to Damnation : Since all Men received in Adam the Pardon of this Disobedience, having also received in him the Penitence, which was accepted for all Men in Adam so long as a Man is unable to use his own Reason : For then he is set at Liberty from the Power of Adam and that of his own Parents, in whose Will he remain'd till then : And coming out of this, he is free to choose good and evil, and neither God nor Men can constrain him to Salvation or Damnation : And that any is saved or damned, can proceed from nothing but the free choice that every one makes of following good or evil, and not at all from Predestination, as they very unjustly do imagine : For God will never deprive Man of his Graces how wicked soever he be, so long as he shall Live in this World. He will never take back the Graces which he gave him in Adam. They shall be still communicated to him, if he will make a good use of them. The Pardon which he granted to Adam, he granted to all Men, and no Body can believe without Sin that God should Reprobate him for the Sin of Adam : For by his Grace he forgave all (d) when he forgave Adam his Sin. He cannot retract the Remission which he then gave to all Men, to Reprobate them upon the same account of Adams Sin : For God never repents him of what by his Mercy he has once done, unless Man of his Free-will come to offend God by other new Sins : Which he is free to do. All

(b) *Wisd.* i. 13, 14. (c) *Gen.* 8. 21. (d) *Rom.* 11. 16.  
1 *Cor.* 7. 14.

Men were created in the State of Innocence in *Adam*; and all Men sinned in *Adam*, and also received the Pardon of this Sin in *Adam*: So that all they who dye in *Adam* are certainly saved by the Mercy of God upon the Pardon that he gave to *Adam*: But if his Children being come to the use of Reason do of their own Free-will turn to evil, they then fall again into Gods displeasure, and begetting Children in the same displeasure, they are in the same Condemnation with their Fathers, as being united with them till they come to the use of their own Reason: For then they begin to have a Being by themselves, whereas before they were reckoned to be one and the same thing with their Parents, because of the Sympathy there is in the Union of the Father with the Child, whose Will he holds in his Power, as *Adam* held the Will of all Men till they attain the use of their own Reason, so that till then they may be predestinated to Salvation or Damnation by the good or ill Will of their Parents, and not by the Decree of God, who cannot and will not destroy any Body, having certainly created and forgiven all the World, that all might be saved, and none Reprobated: For if he had precisely decreed some for Damnation, he should not have had so much Righteousness in himself as what he demands of Men: For he sayes to them, (e) *Love your Enemies, and do good to them that persecute you.* This Counsel would have had no Authority if he himself had Reprobated those who are become his Enemies. This absolute Reprobation would not be good, but the greatest evil that ever could be imagined: How could he command Men to do good to their Enemies, when he himself would do so great and eternal an Evil for the Fault they had committed against him, and that while they were yet in a state of Penitence, as they are during this Life, where Reprobation shall never have place, since till the very last Instant they may find Mercy and Pardon? This Reprobation must only operate after Death, and not during this Life: Because this is (f) the Time of Penitence, in which they who shall be certainly Reprobated can have no part; and it would be a very rigorous and unjust Thing, that God should oblige those to Penitence whom he absolutely resolves to damn. I believe, Sir, they confound the

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(e) *Mat.* 5. 44. (f) *2 Pet.* 3. 9.

Times when they speak of Predestination, and take the present for the Time to come: For at the Judgment, God will then take Two Masses, the One of Elect, and the Other of Reprobates, who do what they will shall assuredly be damned: Because the Time of Penitence will then be past: But during this Life there can be no predestinated Reprobates.

I told her, *That well-meaning Persons did believe there was in this Life Predestination; and that God had here Vessels of Election and Reprobation, and both necessarily so.*

*She said:* This is, Sir, because these Persons, though well-meaning, do not discover the Goodness, and the Righteousness of God; and they judge only according to the Appearance of Things, and not according to the Reality: For God can never Reprobate any after that he has created all for Salvation; and he cannot damn them for *Adam's Sin* after he has pardoned it, and Man has undertaken the Penitence that God enjoined him on that occasion. If there were any Reprobated for this Sin of *Adam*, in strict Justice *Adam* ought to be first of all Reprobated, since he first committed the Sin. 'Tis sad to see and hear how Men (g) mistake the Qualities of God, making him pass as unjust and evil, like themselves. I am sorry, Sir, that I must be so prolix in this Matter, but the Thing requires it: Because it is a most important Point that regards the Glory of God and the Salvation of Men; and therefore I cannot speak too much of it. Be not you more weary to hear than I am to speak of it. I have still had strange Contradictions in my Spirit when I heard Persons of Sincerity aiming to maintain the Truth, and yet notwithstanding very far from knowing it, and taking the Sentiments of Men for infallible Truths, though very often they persist in their Ignorance which is so great and so prejudicial to the Salvation of many: For he who believes he is predestinated to Salvation will not be at the pains to procure it; and though he fall into Sins, he will not repent of them, believing that he cannot be damned, and that he shall one Day Repent, though it were but the Last of his Life. Consider a little, Sir, what sloth this occasions in those well-meaning Persons, and in what

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(g) *Psal.* 14. 2. & 82. 5.

hazard they put their Salvation! For it is a Delusion to believe, that we shall be Saved by God's Predestination, Live as we please; for God will never Save any since Adam's Sin, but those who of their Free-will shall resign themselves to the Will of God. Though his Goodness Sav'd all Men in creating them, without any Co-operation of theirs, yet he will Save none without it, after they have their Free-wills to make choice of good or evil. God could indeed Save them before they made Resistance, and while he was absolute Lord of all Things: But since he gave them this Free-will to govern themselves and so many other Things, he cannot Save them without themselves. Therefore no Body should flatter himself to believe that he shall be Saved if he be predestinated; seeing this Predestination can have no more place since the Sin of Adam. Every one must (*b*) exercise himself to work out his Salvation: Because no Body shall obtain it but he who of his own Free-will shall yield up (*i*) into God's Hands the Free Liberty that he gave him: These are the Elect: Because they being yielded up unto God, none can pluck (*l*) them out of his Hands, unless the Person himself should yet (*m*) withdraw from God: Which is almost impossible: Because God still directing him, his Will can no more be led to evil, than that of God is, unto which it is joyned and united. The Goodness of God replenishes it with so many Graces (*n*) that it is impossible not to follow them. How could the same Goodness ordain, that any should be Reprobated, since nothing that is evil can proceed from it? Must not the Reprobation of Men of necessity come from their evil Will? Since it is impossible for God to do evil, it is consequently impossible for him to Reprobate so much as one Soul. If it be, it is still its own Fault only, and not at all a Predestination to Damnation: Because God damns no (*p*) Body, not even at the Last Day of Judgment. For they who shall be then absolute Reprobates, shall condemn (*q*) themselves; when the Justice of God shall appear to them, their Injustice will give Sentence against themselves, and confine

(*b*) *Phil.* 2. 12. (*i*) *Psal.* 31. 6. (*l*) *John* 10. 28.  
(*m*) *Heb.* 10. 38. (*n*) *Cant.* 1. 4. (*o*) *Isa.* 60. 3. (*p*)  
*Hos.* 13. 9. (*q*) *Wisd.* 5. 2-15.



them to Hell as the just Merit of their Iniquities, and not at all as the Discretion of God.

I said to her, It was very probable, that God can damn no Body, since he is all good, and can do no Evil; thus notwithstanding of this, we see according to our short Prospect of Effects as if Men were Predestinated to good and evil: As in the Conversion of St. Paul (r), and of (s) Mary Magdalen; and on the contrary, in the Reprobation (t) of Judas, and (u) of the wicked Thief.

She said: Sir, These different Accidents are not considered in their Source; but only superficially gone over, and judg'd according to Humane Sentiments, which does not penetrate the Righteousness of God: St. Paul was not only a Chosen Vessel on God's part, but also on the part of his own Free will: For after he had the use of Reason, he was alwayes (x) zealous of the Law of God, and 'tis very probable he had resigned his Free will to God according to his Knowledge, because all that moved him to persecute the Christians was only a desire to maintain his Law, which he believed was more perfect, as being given by God; and imagining that the Christians aimed to destroy it, he would maintain it, and believe that by doing this he greatly pleased God, who seeing this good Desire (z) would needs draw him out of his Ignorance in an outward and extraordinary manner: Because it is God's Property to abound in Grace, and to prevent Men of good Will by such Means as whereby they may discover that he favours them. Therefore he appeared visibly to St. Paul, by some Light, and made him blind, asking him, *wherefore he persecuted him?* Making him understand by these outward Signs the State of his Soul; by the Light he shews him, that he was in darkness; by the Blindness of his Eyes, the Blindness of his Mind, which must be directed to some one who might make him see the Truth; and by the Question, *Wherefore he persecuted him?* to shew him how much he was deceived, in Prosecuting the Christians who were the People of God. This he knew not, all these Things fell out not because God

(r) Acts 9. 3. (s) Luke 7. 37. (t) John 17. 12.  
(u) Luke 23. 39. (x) Phil. 3. 6. (y) Gal. 1. 14. (z)  
1 Tim. 1. 13.

had partially chosen St. Paul to be his Apostle : But because he had of his own Free-will chosen to follow Good, and to resign himself to God. But whereas Men see only these outward Things, they believe God acts by Passion as they do, and that he prefers one of his Creatures to another : Which he does not at all : For he loves them all equally, as being all his Children, and nevertheless gives more Grace to those who are most resigned to him : And this with Reason : For a Son who does his Fathers Pleasure, and is dedicated to his Will, is more worthy of Favours than another who resists and despises the Will of the same Father.

Margalen received also the Grace of Conversion, though she was a Sinner : But if we consider well her inward Disposition, we shall clearly perceive that she was truly disposed to resign her self to God notwithstanding her Sins : For she no sooner heard the Truth from her Saviours Mouth, but she quitted her Sins (a) and bewailed them bitterly, detested her Vanities, and followed Jesus Christ through all. How many other Persons heard the same Truth, without resolving to follow him ? A Thousand Persons followed Jesus Christ bodily, and heard the same Words, but produced not the same Effects : This cannot come from God, who has still the same Efficacy : But it proceeds from the Indisposition of Souls who do not receive it effectually. And Men not being able to dive into the Interior, imagine that this is done by God independently. In this, they are greatly deceived : Which they shall see, at the Last Day of Judgment, wherein many shall be Saints who were despised and condemned in this World ; and many others shall be Reprobated, who here were held for Saints : Because Men regard only the outside : But God (b) tries the Reins, and examines the Conscience, which is known to him alone. Therefore Men ought never to judge nor dispute of the Works of God : Because they are blind and ignorant in his Matters ; and when they say that he Saved and Reprobated some in this World, they calumniate him, and blaspheme against his Qualities of Righteousness and Goodness.

(a) Luke 7. 38. (b) 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. & 6. 1. (c) Rev.

That Judas was damned, was by his own Free-will, and not by the Decree of God, who spoke more to him to convert him than ever he did to St. Paul or Magdalen; and that the wicked Thief is damned, was by his obduracy in Sin: For if he had acknowledged his Fault, he would have been saved as well as the other.

I said to her, That no Body thought it a Blasphemy against God to say, That none can be saved without the particular Grace of God, and that some have it, and some have it not; and that he gives it to whom he pleases.

She said: These Terms of speaking, Sir, make nothing as to the reality of the Thing. It may indeed be said truly, that none can be saved without the particular Grace of God: But to say that God gives it only to whom he pleases, and to understand thereby that he gives it to some and denies it to others with respect of Persons, is Blasphemy: Because he bestows it alwayes according (d) to his Righteousness, not according to his own Choice: For this is only the way of passionate Men, to favour those for whom they have an Inclination: God gives indeed more Grace to some than to others; but alwayes (e) in proportion as each one does more resign himself to his Will: For he sayes, (f) *Be ye faithful in little things, and I will place you over great things*: To shew that he encreases his Grace alwayes according to our Fidelity. That particular Grace which we stand in need of to be saved, was given to us all in the Creation of Adam: For he could not create us to Salvation without enduing with suitable Grace for it; and the Grace of raising us up again after Sin was also given us in Adam, which we might enjoy yet provided we use the same Means of his Penitence: And if we have sinned after him by our own Will, it shall be forgiven us provided we take up the same Penitence, which consists, (g) in the Shame and Confusion that Adam had, in the Fear he had of God, not daring to appear before him, and in the Accepting of the Penitance of Labouring the Ground and gaining his Bread with the Sweat of his Face. Many Men now say they have not Grace that they might get rid of their Sins: And if they would

(d) *Psal. III. 7, 8.* (e) *Matth. 25. 15.* (f) *ver. 21.*  
(g) *Gen. 3. 8, &c.*

examine their Consciences well, they would find it is because they have no Repentance nor Confusion for having committed them; nor yet the fear of God, nor a desire to do Penance for them: And that they may not acknowledge so great Faults, they say, they have not the Grace of God that they might amend. This is to blame God for their own Wickedness. For very often they love their Sins, and are only afraid of the Chastisements which these have deserved: So that if God had not a Hell to chastise them, they would never forsake them, so far would they be from desiring to do Penitence for them. And yet notwithstanding of all this they are bold to say, that they have not the *sufficient*, or *effectual* Grace of God, according to their con'd Terms, upon which they build great Disputes, which being well examined, we shall find them to be founded only upon Words; and that the Truth is alwayes true; and that God gave Graces to Man in *Adam* but too sufficient for Salvation, and even generally to all Men (*b*) for obtaining the Pardon of their Sins. This being so, why should we attribute the Loss of our Salvation, or the not amending of our Lives, to the want of Gods Grace? Is it not a particular Grace when every one as to his own particular has received sufficient (*i*) to forsake his Sin if he will, and to work out his Salvation? Whether God gave these Graces at the Beginning, or if he gives them only at present, they are still from the same God, the Giver of all good, as well in one Season as in another. What needs disputing whether these Graces are given now, or if they have continued with us since *Adam*? It is enough that we have them, and may encrease them by our Fidelity: For it pleases God alwayes (*l*) that we be perfect, and he is more desirous (*m*) to encrease his Graces than we are willing to ask them: And if we have them not in abundance, it is certainly because we have not sought them, or done our endeavour to obtain them: For God on his part is alwayes ready (*n*) to open so soon as we knock at the Gate of his Mercy, which is abundant to all those who seek it, without engaging into that foolish

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(*b*) Eccl. 18. 9--12. 2 Pet. 3. 9. (*i*) Isa. 5. 4. (*l*)  
 Mat. 5. 48. (*m*) Psal. 81. 11, 14. John 16. 24. (*n*)  
 Matth. 7. 7.



Perswasion, That God will not give it but to whom he pleases ; since he is not partial, but alwayes does good (o) to all, even to his Enemies (p) themselves.

*I said to her, That there was much Ignorance in these Disputes : That every one maintained his own Opinion as good ; and that the best believed Predestination, because others attribute too much to the Creature.*

*She said : Sir, I believe that no Body has hitherto discovered the Truth as to the Grace of God : For it cannot be true that God has predestinated any to Damnation, for the Reasons I have told you ; nor yet that Man has the Power to save himself when he pleases: Because the Habit of Sin is as another Nature, from whence we cannot deliver our selves. Even as the Souls which are in Hell, though they have their Free-will cannot use it in good, because they have given loose Reins to Evil, they cannot any more have the Will to quit it ; and being tied and united to all sort of evil Objects, they cannot find the means to do well, even though they should have the Will ; Even so in proportion, those who are yet in this Life, who would not resign themselves to God, but have followed their own Wills, are so habituated to evil, that they cannot have the Will to do well, but with great endeavours, and much force and violence to pull themselves out of the occasions of their Evils : With this difference nevertheless, that Sinners may yet in this World obtain Gods Grace, and the Remission of their Sins : Which damned Souls can never do: Because their Sins have brought on the Sentence of their Eternal Reprobation. Men are ignorant of many Things through the Presumption of their Wisdom. If they would become Children, and be converted to God, they would be far more wise. For (q) God reveals his Secrets to Little ones, and hides them from the Great and the Wise. I wish all the Books about these Disputes were burnt, and that every one would return into the primitive Dependence upon God, which comprehends all Divine Sciences: For he who is resigned to God, is (r) more Learned than all the Doctors of the World.*

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(o) *Psal.* 145. 9. *Ecc.* 18. 12, 13. (p) *Rom.* 5. 6, 10.  
(q) *Mat.* 11. 25. (r) *Psal.* 119. 99, 100.

What can be ascribed to the Creature, since it has (s) nothing that it has not received of God? There was a Time when it was not; and when it came to be, it's God who gave it being, and all the Powers of Soul and Body: The Instinct to do well, and the Liberty to love God come also of his Free Gift; if the Creature has a good Thought, (t) it comes from him. What can be ascribed to the Creature, since it is come of nothing, and can do no good thing without God? If he gave it that Inclination to good, or that good Thought when he created it, or if he gives them as yet, is it not still the same Giver, or the same God, who works Salvation in his Creature? Where is their place for disputing to know whether Man can save himself, since he is nothing (u), and has nothing (x) that he has not received? And this is an Eternal Truth, that Salvation and all other good (y), comes from God; and that all Evil and Damnation comes from Man; and he who is saved (z) cleaves to the Grace of God; and he who is damned resists it. What Argument will they bring yet in the Dispute about Grace after so clear and convincing Reasons? If Man may save himself when he will, it is alwayes by the Grace of God, who created him for Salvation, and imprinted in him this Inclination to good, and this desire to be saved. How can they attribute any thing to the Creature, even though it should be said, that he may save himself when he will; since this Will was given him by God? He cannot ascribe it to himself. Whether it was given him in his Creation, or at the Hour that he is Converted, this should not cause so many Disputes, so little profitable either to the one or the other Party: Because he who holds that his Salvation depends upon the Predestination of God does certainly conceive a Sloth to Good, being perswaded that his Salvation is decreed, do what he will; and on the contrary, he who believes he may save himself when he pleases, would not be at much trouble to advance in Vertue; since he believes his Salvation depends on his own Will, he will imagine that he shall come still in time to be saved, though it should be at the end of his Life. And hereby these Disputes instead of

(s) 1 Cor. 4. 7. (t) 2 Cor. 3. 5. (u) 2 Cor. 12. 11.  
 x) John 3. 27. (y) Hos. 13. 9. (z) Psal. 72. 28.

bringing any good to Souls, do cause them great Mischiefs of Sloth and Negligence as to Salvation, and Mistakes of God : For the more we will needs know him by Arguments, the more we sink into Darkness.

I said to her, *That all the Schools then ought to be overturned, since the Disputes which they reckon the most saving make us to mistake God and to neglect our Salvation.*

*She said:* Truly, Sir, this is very desirable, that Men would abandon all their Studies that they might resign themselves to the Will of God : since this is the one thing necessary, upon which our Salvation depends. To what purpose is it to make so many Books, so many Studies, so many Disputes, since all Perfection, the Law, and Salvation, consist in the RESIGNING of our Will to that of God ! All other Things are vain or useless : For we are created for no other thing but for ever to take our Delight with God. For what end should we amuse our selves, with so many different Things, and fill our Minds with Studies, Sciences, and Disputes, which are only for this transient Life, and in the mean time give great Hindrances to the RESIGNATION that we ought to make of our Will to that of God ? For as long as Man is busied in Studies, Sciences, and Disputes, he acts alwayes by his own Motion : Because those who are resigned to God, do nothing but receive from him, and while they do not affect any Sciences, (a) they possess more of them than all they can Learn in the Schools, which are alwayes full of many Defects, because every one is alwayes concern'd in his own Opinion, which can be only Humane, Limited, and Ignorant : And all these so imperfect Things hinder the Light of the Holy Spirit, which only enlightens Souls according as they are (b) emptied of all Earthly Objects of which Studies and Disputes are the most Lively to fill the Faculties of the Soul. This has occasioned the Holy Doctours to continue in many Errours touching God's Dealings : Because the Pre-occupation of their Studies has hindred the Light of the Holy Spirit, by which they might discover all Things, if the disturbance of their Humane Learning had been removed : For this hindered them from seeing the simple Purity of Divine Things,

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(a) *Phil.* 3. 7, 8. (b) *Wis.* 1. 4, 5.

and the one thing needful for our Salvation, which is, the RESIGNATION of our selves to GOD.

I said to her, *That at least Divines would be needful, to expound the Scriptures to the People, and to teach them saving Truths: Since we are born in ignorance we cannot know but what is taught us.*

*She said:* These Doctours of the Law put to death Jesus Christ; and those who have followed them, have taught many Errours to the People: So that I believe if many of them had been Heathens, or brought up in uninhabited Deserts, without being instructed by any, they would have attained to a greater Knowledge of God, than what they have acquired by the Instruction of all these Doctors, who have often taught the Doctrines of Men, instead of that of God: And if these Persons were not full of these Doctrines, they would certainly be at more Liberty to resign themselves to God: So many Laws and Means which they have taught them, are so many Ropes and Chains which withdraw them from it. For it is certain that one who has been taught nothing, will still have a natural Bent and Inclination to Good: Because all that is Good, is Lovely; and if he shall apply himself never so little to consider the Works of God, he must of necessity be brought to Love him: For he would see that all that he made, is Good: By seeing the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, and all the Heavens, he must confess that the Authour of all these Things is perfect; and looking on the Earth, the Trees, the Plants and Elements, he must discover an incomprehensible Divinity, who had the Skill to make all these admirable Things. Which obliges all that are Reasonable to Love him. And when Man considers himself, and sees the Art there is in the Fabrick of his Body, in the Faculties of his Soul, in the Subtlety of his Spirit, he must confess that there is a God the Authour of all this, to whom all Things ought to be ascribed: Because no Creature is able to do any such thing. By all which things (c), a Man comes more perfectly to the Knowledge of God, than by Sciences and the Expositions of all the Doctors of the World, who have nothing but Limited Sciences.

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(c) *Psal.* 19. 1, &c.



## The Twentieth and Third Conference,

*Shews, That it is by Faith only that we can be Saved, which coming from God works still Resignation: Even among the Heathens, &c.*

I said to her, That all this Knowledge of God was nothing but the Faith of a Heathen, that it was not capable to work Salvation, that to be saved we must have a Divine Faith.

She said: Sir, You are ignorant yet of a great many Things, For that Faith which you call *Heathen* is *Divine*; because it comes immediately from God, who has imprinted in the Soul of all Men this Divine Light (d) that leads them to the Knowledge of the true God. This is a Grace infused without the Concurrence of any Men, which is much more perfect then the Faith we give to the Things they propose to be believed by us in the *Roman Church*, many of which are very absurd, and neither respect the Glory of God, nor our Salvation. They give us for an Article of Faith, That there are Three Persons in God: Though nevertheless no Creature can comprehend what is in God, but by his Operations which we see with our Eyes, as that he is Almighty, that he is All just, all Good, and True: Because all that we see he operates in us, and in other Creatures, bear these Three Qualities: But to know if there be Three Divine Persons in God, this surpasses our Capacity: Because God is an incomprehensible (e) Being, and was never discovered by any so as to know what there is in his Divinity. They propose also to us many Things for Articles of Faith, which are not of its true Essence; seeing no Body can be saved without Faith, and they continually propose to us new Things

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(d) Prov. 20. 27. John 1. 9. (e) 1 Tim. 6. 16.

for Articles of this Faith, which our Forefathers never believed as such : And if we cannot have true Faith now without believing them, it were to be feared that our Forefathers were not Saved, since they did not believe those new Things which are now proposed to us as Articles of Faith. They never believed that the Virgin *Mary* was conceived without Original Sin; and now they would make this Belief to pass for an Article of Faith : Though nevertheless, there is no appearance of Truth in it : For the Virgin came out of the Masse of *Adam*, as all the rest of Men : And she did also undergo the Penitence common to all the Children of *Adam*, having gained her Bread by Bodily Labour, and suffered the Malignity of all the Elements ; and her Son Jesus himself shiver'd for Cold in the Stable of *Bethlehem*, shewing that he was a real Man, descended from *Adam*, subjecting himself to the same Penitence that our First Father had received and accepted from God in the Remission of his Sin. Why should they now lay it before us as an Article of Faith, that the Virgin was conceived without Sin, since all Humane Creatures, which are born of Parents who live under the Dependance of God, having accepted the Penitence that God enjoyn'd *Adam*, are all born in the Indulgence that God gave to *Adam* ? Wherefore should there be a particular Article of Faith for the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin ; as also for the Infallibility of the Pope ; seeing all these Things have no respect to the true Faith, which must work out our Salvation ? For if the Virgins Conception was Immaculate, or if the Pope be infallible, this makes nothing for our Salvation, nor as to the Knowledge we ought to have of a God upon whom all Things depend. This Light infused in my Soul, is true Faith ; and the Dependance that I desire to have upon the same God, is the Work of my Faith. What need is there to add yet to this the believing that the Pope is infallible, since I have the same Light of Faith, that tells me, No Man can be infallible ? Since *Adam* created in Innocence, and endued with all the Grace and Holiness that can be met with in any Man, did fall, and by falling so grossly shew that he was not infallible ; may not a Man who is a Sinner, fail or err ? All these Faiths and Beliefs are not divinely infused by God into our Soul, as that Faith is which

makes us know (*f*) a God above all Things, All-good, All-just, All-mighty, but Incomprehensible. This Faith, Sir, which you call *Heathen*, is the True Faith, which is able to work Salvation in all those who in consequence of it do through Love resign themselves to the same God.

I asked her, *If she believed the Heathens would be saved, since they are not baptized?*

*She said:* Yes, Sir, All the *Heathens* who knew God by his Works, and resigned their Will to him, shall assuredly be saved: For they had operating Faith, True Faith, in believing that there is One Almighty God, who created the Heaven, the Earth, and all Things, and they had the Works of Faith, when they were resign'd to the Will of the same God. Which appeared in all those who despised the Things of this Life for that which is to come. They could not have done this but by a Divine Light, that God infused into their Souls: Because the Brutish Senses cannot despise the Pleasures of this Life: For they know no other; and Nature cannot betray it self by despising what is good for it, to choose what is evil for it. When we see one who may have Honours, Riches and Pleasures in this Life, and who yet quits them to be despised, poor and afflicted, we may well believe that he has the Light of Faith infused by God into his Soul: Because neither the Devil, nor Nature would ever induce him to do such Things: For no Body hates his own Flesh; and the Devil incites alwayes to satisfy Nature. And if we see one whom we call a *Heathen*, quit the Conversation of Men, and retire into a Solitude, we may well believe that he has the true Light of Faith, which makes Nature break off conversing with its like: For Sociery is a most Lovely Thing: Man is a Sociable Creature above all the other Animals; and if the Beasts are sad when they are alone, how much more must Man be so when he Lives according to Nature, unless it be some half-broken spirit, who through Melancholly loves rather to be alone to give the more Liberty to its Black Humours? This is not to be found in those who despise Conversation the better to wait on God, and to be delivered from the Troubles they have to live among those who know not God, but offend him every Moment.

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(*f*) Heb. 11. 6. (*g*) Mat. 12. 33. 35.

How could I believe, Sir, that these Souls so excelling in Vertue should not be saved, even though they are not Baptized; since Baptism is only an outward Sign of the INWARD RESIGNATION which they have made of their Will to that of God? That God, *who (b) tries the Reins*, would he not save them, for not having observed this outward Formality, which is done in the sight of Men? We have not a Political God who has need of the Testimony of Men when he sees the Essence of Faith living in our Inward Parts. I reckon such Heathens to be more SAINTS, than many of those who are Canonized by the Roman Church; and wish, Sir, that you had attained to their solid Vertues; that you had a perfect Contempt of this Life, aspiring after another which will deliver us from so many Miseries; and also an entire Resignation of your Will to that of God, in which alone our Salvation consists, and not in so many sorts of Means which they set before us as necessary Things, or a Blind Faith of Things which often respect neither God, nor our Salvation. For though indeed it be Faith to believe that which (i) we do not see, nevertheless that is not to say that we must blindly believe all that they would persuade us: For God has given us an Understanding to comprehend what is comprehensible of the Works of our Faith. For Example: We must believe in God Almighty, who created the Heaven and the Earth. We do not so see this God in whom we believe; but nevertheless, we see evidently that there must be an Almighty God, when we consider the Works that he has done by his Almighty Power; and therefore our Faith is not blind, since it gives Light to see the Works of him in whom we believe. But diverse of these Things which they propose to us as Articles of Faith, are without any appearance of Truth, as is, the Infallibility of the Pope.

I asked her, *If one might be saved without believing all the Articles of Faith in particular?*

*She said:* Yes, Sir, we may be saved by the General Belief (l) that there is one only God the Creatour of all Things, provided that this Belief beget in us the resigning

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(b) Jer. 17. 10. (i) Heb. 11. 1. (l) Heb. 11. 6. Psal. 36. 6, 7, 8.



of our Will to God in whom we believe: Because in this all Things are comprehended: since by being (m) resigned to God, we fulfil all the Articles of Faith, all the Commandments of the Law, and the Evangelical Counsels. And whereas it is said that all Christians are obliged to Learn the chief Points of our Belief, nevertheless this is not that they must Learn this by Rote or by Words: For it is enough to know the substance of them, that we may observe them; for this observing of them is more than to be able to tell them by Rote; it is the same as to all the Articles of our Faith in particular. It is of little moment that we have a particular Belief of so many Points, if we do not observe them all in general by the resigning of our Will to that of God. We have no need of doing any other thing to work out our salvation; for if we had not quitted this Dependence upon God, we should never have had the other Commandments, nor the other Articles of Faith. Our sins alone have occasioned all these Articles, and all these Commandments, and other Means: And sin ceasing, we should have no need of other Laws. So that our sins alone have engendered the Law and the Articles of Faith, which were given us only to reduce our Understanding to a DEPENDANCE upon God. The first thing that God did to bring back Adam to this Dependence from whence he had withdrawn himself while he would needs become wise in himself, he asks him, (n) *Adam where art thou?* Not that God could be ignorant where Adam was, since he knows all things: But it was to recal his Understanding to the Consideration of what he had done in disobeying God, that he might consider the miserable state to which he had brought himself while he would needs depend upon himself. The first Precept that God gave Man, was to make him know the state of his Soul, asking him, *Where art thou?* To make him re-enter into himself, and recollect his Senses, that he might see whither he had strayed from a Dependence upon his God, in which if he had continued, there would have been no need of asking, where he was; since he would have been still in his presence: But since he had withdrawn himself, it was needful that God should call

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(m) *Psal.* 16. 8. & 73. 23, 24. (n) *Gen.* 3. 9.

him back again by asking him, where he was. But as soon as *Adam* acknowledged his fault, and offered himself to God, saying, Here am I, Lord, all confused and trembling, not daring to appear before him, but hiding himself as a Criminal before the face of his Judge, then God gives him the second Precept, saying, *That he should Till the Ground, and gain his Bread in the sweat of his Face.* This was the Penitence enjoyned to satisfie for his sin, which being through Grace remitted to him, he ought nevertheless to suffer some temporal Punishments; and this in Justice: For God had not only bestowed on Man a Divine and Reasonable Soul, and a Free-will to love him; but also many Natural and material Graces: Therefore it was not enough for Man that God had granted him the Remission of his Trespases against him, in restoring him by a second Grace his Reason and his Free-will; but he ought also to satisfie for the Natural and material Graces, which things have not essentially the goodness of God to pardon this Injury received from Man. God, who is good, pardons him the Offence he had committed against his Majesty, and even makes him a garment to cover his Nakedness, that he might lessen his Confusion, he takes care also to thrust him out of Paradise, for fear he should come to eat of the Tree of Life, and by this means live alwayes miserable. All these Favours come from the Divine Goodness. But the Elements, the Earth, and the other Creatures, not having in them this goodness, set themselves against Man, and make him suffer, that by Penitence he might pay for the Rebellion he had committed against their Creator. This the Justice of God own'd, by ordaining *Adam* to undergo the Pains that all these Earthly Creatures should give him: Because they are justly irritated against Man, who was constituted their Lord to whom they ought to be subject and to obey: But since he was a Rebel against his God, they ought in like manner to rebel against him; and being Creatures incapable of Mercy, of necessity Man must satisfie them by a corporeal and material Penitence, like unto their Nature. This was ordained by God, by straight Justice, from which he never departs, exercising alwayes his goodness in that which respects himself, and his Justice as to all his Creatures. Lo this is the reason why God gave Precepts to Man, only for his sins; and this out of his great Mercy, and had it  
not

not been for this, he would have confined Man to Hell for his first Disobedience : But his infinite Goodness has at all times exercised Mercy ; and according as he saw Man stray from him, and quit his **DEPENDANCE**, he called him back still by Precepts, which were like so many Voices that cried, *Adam, where art thou ?* For when the Children of *Israel* gave themselves to Idolatry and other sins, he gave them Ten Commandments, to let them see, that all the Things contained in them are those which withdraw Man from a Dependance upon his God. And afterwards when he would yet stray further from God, by coveting Temporal goods, or Bodily pleasures, or by coveting the Honours (*o*) which Men render one to another, more than to God, he then was so good as to take a Humane Body that he might teach us palpably that all these things did withdraw us from a Dependance upon God, setting before us all the Evangelical Precepts as means to return into this Dependance, wherein our Salvation consists : For he who lives in this **DEPENDANCE**, fulfils all the Laws, which cannot save us without this Dependance. For Faith alone operating can save us, but not the Laws, which are given us only to discover our sins. Faith working is that (*p*) which makes us know God and resign our selves to him, and it contains in it in practice all the Laws and the Articles of Faith : For he who has resigned his Will to God, knows well where (*q*) he is, and will also willingly satisfie (*r*) his just Penitence : He takes good heed also not to commit the things which are forbidden by the Ten Commandments, and not to omit the things therein commanded, and he punctually follows the Counsels of the Gospel ; for he who is resigned to God, cannot any longer have affection for Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, Land, House, or any other thing ; since God who holds our Will has no need of Earthly Possessions, but requires only from us the Divine Things which he bestowed on us, which are proportioned to his Divine Nature ; he can be no more satisfied with Temporal things than a Horse can be fed with stones, which are not a food suitable to his Nature. In short,

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(*o*) *John* 5. 44. & 12. 42, 43. (*p*) *Heb.* 11. per totum.  
 (*q*) *Gal.* 2. 20. (*r*) *Luke* 23. 41.

He who has yielded up and resigned his Free-will to that of God, has no need of observing in particular the Articles of Faith : Because he is restored unto the first Essential Ordinance of God ; and while he continues in this, he has need of no other things ; because God would never have demanded more of us, and even at present (*s*) demands no more of those who will yield up themselves to him. Is it not sad, Sir, that Men now are so far from this One Thing necessary, and that they are subjected to so many several Laws by their sins ? Were it not better to take this first Liberty that God gave us, and to yield it up into his Hands, than to subject our selves to so many Laws, and so many particular Creeds, which do nothing but fill our Understandings, which ought only to be applied to know one Almighty God, the Creatour of all Things, and to be resigned wholly to him ? For our Understanding is not given us by God for the study of Letters, nor for Trafficking in Business : Because God has nothing to do with all these Things, he having created us for no other end but to take his delight with us, which can never have its compleat Joy but by the resigning of our Will to his ; this is what he requires of all Men.

I said to her, *That we find it not written that God precisely demanded of Man the Dependance of his Free-will ; which he ought to do, in case it were so necessary for Salvation.*

*She said :* How, Sir ! Would you make more reckoning of it if this were written upon Paper, or carved on a Stone, than if it were engraven in our (*t*) Heart ? Who is there in the World that has not engraven within him the necessity there is to depend upon God, since all know they have received their Being and all Things from him ? Is there any of never so little Reason who call in question whether to be saved we ought necessarily to depend upon God ? Because none can give us Salvation but he only, and if we withdraw from him, and subject our Divine Free-will unto our Passions, this is to follow our Animal Part, which has no other Salvation but the affording us a little Beastly Sensuality. Even Natural Reason it self may abundantly shew us the need we have of

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(*s*) *Prov.* 23. 26. (*t*) *Deut.* 30. 14. *Rom.* 10. 8.

depending



depending upon God: Because all that we are appertains to him. Can we in good Reason deny a Person what belongs to him in property? Much less can we deny God the Dependance that we owe him. It is true he gave us our Free-will to use it to good or evil; but with this condition, that in case we should turn it to evil we should suffer the Pains that our Evils engendered. And who could ever imagine that Man should be such an Enemy to himself as to withdraw from his Dependance upon God, upon whom depends all his Happiness, to subject himself under the Dependance of his own Will, which is so vicious, and capable only of rendring us miserable both in this Life and in the other? A Man must have lost his Judgment if he do not know the Obligation he has to continue in a Dependance upon God for his Salvation, even though God had not precisely testified or said, That if we would be saved we must be subject to his Will; since Reason, Justice, and Truth, do dictate to us a Thing so reasonable, and the Brute Beasts themselves (u) teach us, to submit to their Benefactors, some of which have sometimes acknowledged all the Dayes of their Life some particular Benefits received from Men. Must God declare to them by Writ the Obligation they have to subject their Wills to his? He abundantly testified that such was his Will when he forbade *Adam* to eat of the Fruit of one Tree only, permitting him to eat of all the rest. Must he say precisely, that he would have Man to submit his Will to his? Nature, Reason, and Understanding were capable enough to comprehend that God would still reserve this Dependance upon himself, reserving for an outward Sign the Fruit of one Tree only. All the World knows well enough that God has no need of any Fruit, and that this Prohibition was the secret Commandment that God gave him not to withdraw from his Dependance: Even as he did not bid *Adam* in express terms, reflect upon himself, and consider the Misery into which he had plunged himself; but he says only, *Adam, where art thou?* These few Words were but too sufficient to make *Adam* understand, that he would do well to examine himself: Just so it was not needful that he should say in express Words,

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(u) *Isa.* 1. 3.

It is my Will that you submit your Will to mine. This ought to be understood sufficiently when he sayes, *I forbid thee to eat of this Tree.* Man in himself had no other Fruit worthy of God, but the Disposal of his Free-will; for all his other Things were either Humane, or Material. This Free-will alone was Divine: The use of which ought to be reserved for God alone: Even though he had never declared that he would have it for himself, yet Man was certainly obliged both by Divine and Humane Right voluntarily to offer it to him.

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## The Twentieth and Fourth Conference,

*Shews, Why Men cannot abandon themselves  
to a Dependance upon God.*

I said to her, *There was nothing more reasonable, nor more just, or perfect, than for Man to resign his Will to that of God, asking her, why Men had difficulty to do this?*

*She said:* Sir, There is nothing better for Man than to resign his Will to that of God, and we see nothing less practised than this: Because no Body applies his Spirit to consider this Obligation. One diverts himself by his Studies; another by his Offices; another by his Trade: Just as if every one had been created only for such Employments. They Rule on Earth as Little Gods, without thinking on this DEPENDANCE; and when God shall come at the Hour of our Death, he will deride the Men who have lived thus, as he did *Adam*, when he clothed him with a garment of Skins, saying to him, (y) *Behold Adam is become a God like us!* Men now may indeed at Death look for the like Reproaches: Because God has placed them in this Valley of Misery to do Penitence;

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and they will needs Rule and take their pleasures in it as in a Paradise, forgetting that they ought to depend upon God, and submit their Wills to his : And instead of doing this, they will needs govern themselves, and follow their own Inclinations. These evil Habits make it seem difficult for Men now to abandon their Wills to God, because they have possessed them till this present Time : And seeing all that has Life is in a continual Motion, if we live to our Senses, we advance alwayes in Brutishness : And if we live to the Devil, we advance alwayes in Malice ; but if we live to God, we advance alwayes in the Divine Nature. The difficulty that we find to resign our Will to that of God, proceeds certainly from this, that we are habituated not to depend on the Will of God, and that we have debased this Divine Quality, that he has given us, even to the Earth, or to Hell. When we leave it to the power of the Devil to Rule over our Free-will, we then render our Divine Souls, Devils ; and when we let it be Ruled by our Brutish Passions, we then render our Divine Soul, Beattly. What Injury does Man to himself that he will not yield up his Free-will into Gods Hand, who would render it wholly Divine ! This is the One Thing necessary, and we do not apprehend it ! Nevertheless, we cannot be saved by any other Means, since this is the only Way that leads to Salvation, we must of necessity retake it, or we shall all perish. We must be born again, and re-enter into the Original State in which God created us : For he has changed nothing in Man by Sin ; no more than he has done, in the Earth, the Beasts, and Elements, except that all these Things have contracted some Malignity in themselves, which Man must correct by resisting his own Will, in which this Malignity resides : For as long as we shall follow our own Will, we shall still grow worse : Because this Malignity that is in our Will, encreases according as we follow it. By which we may evidently see that he who will not yield up his own Will to God cannot be saved : For this Divine Quality which is in us, being become brutish, produces all sorts of Evils ; even as the Devils since they applied their Divine Qualities to do evil, have an insatiable appe-

rise to Evil. But when this our Will is yielded up into Gods Hand, it is in its Center, and produces all sort of good: Of necessity therefore we must retake our (a) Original, and the first essential Commandment that God gave us, which is, a DEPENDANCE upon his Will. It is this that Jesus Christ sayes, (b) Except you repent, you shall all perish. The trouble that we shall have to resign our Will to God, will purge our Souls; and by this Violence we shall possess them. note

I said to her, That none had ever searched so deep into the necessity of this Dependence upon God as she had deduc'd it: Which notwithstanding was so clear and true, that no Body could doubt of it: That Man owed all to God, since he had received all from him.

She said: Sir, The cause why they do not penetrate the necessity of this Dependence upon God, is, the Blindness of Men, who being diverted by their Worldly Affairs and Business, do not apply themselves to that which concerns their Eternal Happiness; contenting themselves with this, to believe blindly what is laid before them, that is, the Reasons and Sentiments of Men; without searching into the Essence of the Thing, or the Truth of their Original. It is in this that Jesus Christ said, (c) If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. They teach in the Roman Church a great many Lawes and Commands, Counsels, Rules, Means, Cases of Conscience, and a Thousand sorts of Inventions, to please God, which of themselves are not capable of saving so much as one Soul: While in the mean time all the World build their Salvation upon these Things: But they are deceived, since nothing can obtain it but a DEPENDANCE UPON GOD; And as near as we come to this Dependence, we come as near to our Salvation; and as far as we are estranged from it, we are as near our Damnation. We ought not to go by Four Ways when there is but one that is straight. The taking so many different Methods to go to God, are only By-ways, since there is but One only that can unite us to him. That is the DEPENDANCE of our Will upon his, all being comprehended in it; because this is the Essence of all

(a) Judg. 8. 6. (b) Luke 13. 3. (c) Matth. 15. 14.



God : Since nothing is good (a) but God, no good can come but from him (e) alone, who does alwayes well, and never ill. Nevertheless he will not act in us any good but in so far (f) as our Free-will is resigned to him. He does alwayes good where he meets with no opposition, and he will never do it (g) where our Will opposes it self : Because it is he who gave this Liberty to the Soul ; and he will never repent of any of the Works that he has done. If we could speak of God as we would do of a Man, we would say, that he is very sorry, when Man withdraws himself from him, and damns himself, but that he cannot hinder it. Not that the Almighty Power of God does not reach all Things, or that his Power is limited ; but it is because it pleased him to give Man this Free-will when he created him, that with it he might love him ; and Man nevertheless turns away from loving Him to love some Creatures that are unworthy of him. This is an occasion for him to repent (h), to speak in our Gibberish. But God can never have any kind of Repentance, or any other Passions : Because he is (i) unchangeable, and never retracts what he (k) has once done. The first and last Thing that he demands of Man is, that he acknowledge in all things the Dependance that he has upon God ; and that he so love him, as to yield up the Free-will he gave us, into his power. Lo this is all that God requires of Man. All the other Precepts, Counsels and Commands, are only accessory and casual, not at all necessary for him that fulfils this only essential Commandment, which Men now have forgot because of the Traditions of Men, which has so filled their Spirits that no Body penetrates now into the Essence of Vertue, and they know not where in it consists. Which is very deplorable.

I asked her, *How it was possible that Man should come to such an Ignorance of God, and of himself, and to such a forgetfulness of his Salvation?*

She said, The Reason is, Sir, that whereas Men ought to apply their Reason and Understanding to know the Works of God, they have applied them to Earthly

(d) Mat. 19. 17. (e) Jam. 1. 17. (f) Psal. 81. 12-15. (g) Matth. 23. 37. (h) Gen. 6. 6. (i) Jam. 1. 17. (k) Rom. 11. 29.

Things ;

Things; and pried into the Works of God to apply them to Evil. For Example: We see some Rod or Chastisement befall us: We immediately say; that God is angry, and that he afflicts us. These are the Sentiments of the most pious, and they are much better than those who ascribe this to Fortune, or Second Causes, for there is no Solidity in this; whereas the first has some regard of God, yet nevertheless it is so imperfect, that it is injurious to him, instead of being honourable. For if we speak truly of God, it cannot be said that he is angry, because he is not subject to any Passion, no more to Wrath than other Passions: Neither does he afflict us; because no Evil or Afflictions can come from him, as being the Source of all Good, from which no Evil can be derived; But these Terms are used even in the Holy Scripture, to make us understand something of God according to our Capacity: And if it were said, that any other thing than God afflicts us, it would induce Men, being so imperfect, to Vengeance, instead of Repentance. It is better therefore to use Terms which do rather excite us to Virtue, as the Scripture way of speaking does wisely; but we must not infer from this that these Terms are in effect true; but only to give us some signification, that is less evil, of the things that we ought to understand. And nevertheless, they insist sometimes upon certain Terms, and thereon build Disputes, and Questions, which amuse the World, and turn them away from the knowledge of God, and of themselves, and of Eternal Salvation, as the Debate about the Grace of God, or Predestination has done. They found it upon this, that God in several places of the Sacred Text has said *(l)*; that he has *elect*ed one, and *reprob*ated another, or that he *forsook* his People, or *hardened Pharaoh's Heart*. These are all Terms accommodated to our Capacity, but it does not follow that they are so really: For God *Elect*ed all Men that were or shall be to Salvation *(m)*, and none to Reprobation: Because God *(n)* does always good to all, without respect of Persons, or regard of Mens Merit or Demerit, for he respects himself only that he may still exercise his Goodness, from which there cannot proceed so much as the Reprobation of

*(l)* Rom. 9. &c. *(m)* 1 Tim. 2. 4. *(n)* Mat. 5. 45.

one Soul : For where there is nothing but all good, there no evil can be found ; and Reprobation is the greatest Evil in the World, which never can come from God, who is all good. And to believe that God gives his Graces only to whom he pleases, is also to render him partial and passionate, favouring one more than another. Which cannot be found in God, who is always just as well as always good, and never favours any out of Preference ? Though the Scripture uses these Terms, nevertheless the Favours of God are still enlarged according as the Soul resigns its self to his Will, and no farther : Because his Goodness is still accompanied with Righteousness. He still abounds in Graces, and denies them to none : If any do not feel the Operations of them, it is because he uses them according to his own Will, applying them to evil ; as is done in Nature, when they abuse their Beauty, Health, Wealth, or Honours to offend God ; who notwithstanding does not withdraw these Natural Graces because of their Abuse, no more than he does his Spiritual Graces ; which his Goodness still bestows, though we abuse them : For God can never cease to do well. And when 'tis said that he forsakes his People, this is also but a way of speaking : Because God never forsakes any thing, since he comprehends in himself all things. He cannot quit or abandon any thing, no more than he can harden the Hearts of any : For this would be to do an ill thing : But these are all Terms used in the Scriptures that Men may not interpret to an evil Sense the Works which they see fall out without their knowledge : For if the Text said that Men have the Grace of God, and also their Salvation at their will ; they so love themselves, that they would not any longer acknowledge God, but would ascribe to themselves the Power of saving themselves ; which would be a greater Evil than to say, that our Salvation depends immediately upon the Grace of God : Because this is true, but not in the way that Men take it, when they say, that they cannot be saved without the Grace of God, as if God had not given his Graces to all Men from their Creation, which, whatever a Man do, will never be taken back or retracted. If he hardens his Heart to evil, this is when he will irreconcilably withdraw his Free-will from a Dependence upon God : Then the Justice of God cuts short this Injustice. So that it may be indirectly said, that God hardens

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hardens Hearts, even as we would say that the Fire has burnt the Wood that was put into it, this would be a true thing: For the Fire consumes all that is capable of that Element; but if nothing be put into it for its Aliment, it would consume its self, instead of consuming any other thing. Even so is it as to the Justice of God, <sup>(o)</sup> which devours all that is opposed to it: Unjust Hearts are hardened by the Justice of God, which like a Fire devours all that is thrown into it. When a wicked Man has determined to run to evil, he falls into God's Justice, and his Heart is hardened; because he has cast himself into the devouring Fire of this Justice.

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The Twentieth and Fifth Conference,

*Shews, That all the Wisdom of Men is nothing but Ignorance in respect of the Divine Light; and that God will destroy this Humane Wisdom to give place to that of his Holy Spirit,*

I said to her, *That she overturned all the Wisdom of the Learned, and that there was no more place for Study.*

*She said: I told you long ago, Sir, that the Time is come wherein God will abolish the Wisdom of the Wise* <sup>(p).</sup> *Tis not only the worldly Wise, or Humane Wisdom that he speaks of; for that will perish of its self; but it is of the Wisdom of those who believe they are wise in the Works of God, or in Theologie. This Wisdom will be destroyed through the Goodness and Mercy of God: Because many of these are Men of good Inclinations, but they perish through Ignorance: For they maintain the*

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(o) *Isa.* 27. 4. (p) *Isa.* 29. 14.



Sentiments of Men which have been given them for infallible Truths: And you may easily perceive, Sir, that they are not such, nor founded upon the Wisdom of God, which is alwayes the same. If you consider those who have spoken of the Grace and Works of God, you will find them different in Sentiments, though divers of them were Saints. This may be an Evidence to you that their Wisdom was not Divine, and that their Learning has darkned the Light of Truth, which can never change nor contradict it self in any thing: And because this Learning is a Hindrance to the Holy Spirit who comes now to illuminate the Souls of Men of good Will, of necessity this Learning must be destroyed in them. This the Goodness of God will do (g) perfecting Praise by the Mouth of Sucklings and Infants. The Wisdom of God is our Mother, from which we ought to draw all our Substance, which Wise Men cannot do before their Wisdom be destroyed. This the Goodness of God will do in our Time, destroying the Wisdom of the Wise, and abolishing the Prudence of the Prudent, and they will be asked very shortly, (r) where is the Wise, the Scribe, and the Disputer of this World? For they shall not be found any longer, since God will abolish all their Prudence and Wisdom by the Mouth of Infants. I wish, Sir, you were the first, and that I might say to you with the Spouse (s) *Who will give me my Brother sucking the Breasts of my Mother, that I might find him without, and might kisse him!* The Wisdom of God is the Common Mother of all those who are resigned to him. Suck its Breasts boldly, they will fill you with Delights. And as soon as I shall find you void of all your Sciences, I will salute you in the Unity of Divine Wisdom. Quit, Sir, all other Wisdom, and depart from your own Wisdom and Prudence. It is an Instance of God's Goodness that he comes to deprive you of them. Do not believe, as the Wise of the World do, that your Happiness consists in your Wisdom. Since it must be destroyed before you receive the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit, and you confess to me that I overthrow the Wisdom of the Wise, and judge that it is not fit to Study

(g) Psal. 8. 3. (r) 1 Cor. 1. 20. (s) Cant. 8. 1.

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any longer, walk while this Light lasts (t), fearing lest you be surprized with Darkness, which is now spread through all the World. Get out of it, for all is corrupted there. Keep your self solitary; for the World at present is a Temporal Hell, wherein nothing is to be seen but Objects which incite to evil. God is not any longer known nor loved there: Nothing is to be heard there but Blasphemies: The most Holy will say that they have not the Grace to do well, and that God has predestinated whom he pleased; that all these Decrees will come to pass do what they will; with many other Calumnies which they utter against God: And as his Name is blasphemed in the Eternal Hell; so is it in this World which is a Temporal Hell, where St. John has well said in his *Revelation*, (u) *That the Whore was full of Names of Blasphemies.* And if the best do thus blaspheme the Name of God, how much more must the Wicked do so, who deny him by Word or Deed, by denying him their own Wills, saying, they are their own Masters, and that they may dispose of all that belongs to them, or sometimes, what belongs to others, when it is entrusted to them? So that he who would take Sanctuary from the Perils of his Salvation, must retire from the World, where Salvation is no longer to be had: For all have forsaken God, and no Body knows him any longer: Every one having made an Idol of his own Imagination; or to say better, Every one makes a God after his own fashion: One sayes, that he damns; another, that he forsakes; another, that he permits evil; and that he rejects many; though God can never reject any, seeing he is greater than all Things, and comprehends all in himself, and can never do evil, and never ceases to do good. All the Qualities of God are unknown to Men: For none possess true Wisdom, because none will resign their Will to his. Every one follows his own.

I said to her, *That I was altogether convinced; and that I perceived very clearly that all the Wise were greatly ignorant of the Wisdom of God; that all Studies and Disputes were founded only upon Terms and Words, or upon the Sentiments of Men.*

(t) John 12. 36. (u) Rev. 17. 3.

*She said:* I bless God, Sir, that he gives you these Lights. Do not look back any longer: For Men are deceived, and do deceive one another. They have long agoe. quitted the Light of Truth; and the more they thought to find it, by Humane Reasons or Arguments, the farther they have been removed from it: Because the same Wisdom is needful (x) for understanding the Holy Scriptures that did at first dictate them; and the Men who are wise in this World are very seldome humble (y), and God (z) resists the Proud, and gives his Wisdom (a) to the Humble and the Little Ones. Therefore the Wise continue ignorant of the Wisdom of God, and are only Wise in themselves, and such Wisdom is (b) Foolishness before God; for it is of no use for the knowledge of Eternal Things; and the World pass will away with all its Sciences; so that all the Wisdom of Men is nothing but Vanity (c), upon which we ought never to build our Salvation, since it is written, (d) *Wo to the Man, that puts his confidence in Man!* Which nevertheless all Men almost do now: For it seems, for a Man to be sure of his Salvation it is enough to follow the Sentiment of some Author, or some Saint; though all Men may err and fail, even though they were canonized for Saints: This is not a solid Bottom whereupon to found our Belief and Salvation; because there is but one only Truth, which is God; and he who is not united to this Truth, is in Errour and Lies; and still walking in Darknes, he knows not whither he goes. Learning has led Men into great Presumption and Pride, which estranges them from God: So that they shall never know the Truth but by becoming Children, re-entering into the Womb of their Mother, which is the Original and the State of their Creation. They must re-take their first Aims if they would discover the Secrets of God's Grace, the Power of Free-will, the Qualities of God, the Love that he bears to Men, and the way how he Rules and governs them, Nothing of all this has been known hitherto.

(x) 1. Cor. 12. 8. 11. 12. (y) 1. Cor. 8. 1. (z) 1. Per. 5. 5. (a) Matth. 11. 25. (b) 1. Cor. 3. 19. (c) Rom. 1. 22. (d) Jer. 17. 5.

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I said to her, *That we had been for a long time in Errour; that it was a wonder God had permitted such Ignorance in his Church.*

*She said:* Sir, God never permits (e) Evil on his part; but he will not hinder Man to use his Free-will (f) to do evil, or good, according to his desire. If Ignorance entered into the Church, it is not he that brought it in; because he rear'd it up in Light and Divine Wisdom, which if it had followed, it could never have fallen into Errour: Because the Wisdom of God is all beautiful, and without Spot; but Men who ought to receive and follow it, have withdrawn themselves from it, and embraced the Spirit of Errour, which has still encreast to a greater Darkness, to such a degree, as that no Body knows now where he walks; and they take False for Real, and Lying for Truth, and which is worse, (g) they love their Darkness and Errours rather than Light: Though it be so agreeable, yet nevertheless it is despised by Men now, who do so cleave to their own Wisdom, that they despise the Truth that is presented to them, esteeming more their acquired Sciences than the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit, which is the only Mother that can nourish our Divine Souls, which is at present despised by the Learned of this Age. Yea, not only despised, but even shock'd and persecuted: For it is ordinary for the Wicked to persecute those who do not follow their Iniquities; and for Fools to despise what they understand not, or what they cannot comprehend. The Wise of this World will never comprehend the Wisdom of God (h) till they believe themselves to be ignorant, as they truly are; and till they shall become Children; not that they must become Fools, nor yet weak in Judgment, as a Little Child is; but till they shall submit their Wills to God (i) as a Little Child submits himself to his Nurse, who takes him up, and lays him down, and gives him his Nourishment according as she judges it to be needful, without the Child's opposing himself thereto: And though he cry sometimes when his Nurse handles him, yet nevertheless he ceases not to do those necessary Things about him. Even so would God do with our

(e) Eccles. 15. 20. (f) Psal. 81. 13. Zech. 11. 12  
(g) John 3. 19. (h) 1 Cor. 3. 18. (i) Psal. 131. 2.



Will if it were resigned to him. But when we will needs rule it our selves, he lets us erre and be ignorant of what we are obliged to know : Because *he (l) resists the Proud.*

## The Twentieth and Sixth Conference,

*Declares the necessity there is of becoming Children, that we may enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, renouncing all worldly Wisdom, and all Humane Abuses.*

I asked her, *How it was possible for a Man to quit all the Sciences acquired after the manner of Men, that he may become a Child, when he is come to Age?*

*She said:* Sir, If you do it not, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus Christ (m) tells this : And he cannot lye : But he presses this necessity of becoming a Child by threatening that otherwise we shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ; which would be the greatest evil that could befall a Man. It were better never to be born than not to be saved : And since we cannot be saved without becoming Children, we ought to become so at what Price soever. Would you, Sir, esteem more the Honour of the World, or your acquired Sciences, than the Kingdom of Heaven ? This would be very lamentable ; since all the Things of this World pass away like a Bird that cleaves the Air, and leaves no Mark of its Way : So when we shall have past through this World, nothing shall remain to us of our Sciences and Learning, nor yet of our Honour and Reputation : All ends with us ; and if some retain still an esteem of our Wisdom, after Death we are insensible of it. If we pleased our selves

(l) 1 Pet. 5. 5. (m) Matth. 18. 3.

while we lived here, the suffering for these Complacencies wait for us in the other World. And our having been wise here is so far from making us happy, that 'tis a great unhappiness to have lost the Kingdom of Heaven by this Wisdom. Lay aside, Sir, all these Humane Considerations, and become a Child, though you be aged. You have need to make the more haste; for fear lest Time and Life fail you. Never advise <sup>(n)</sup> with Flesh and Blood; for they deceive and corrupt us. Let us only consult with our Divine Soul, which is reasonable, and it will tell you, that there is nothing better or more reasonable than to resign our Free-will to God, who gave us it; and to submit it to his government as a Little Child; That on this our Eternal Happiness depends; and that nothing else can save us; because without this Dependence there is no Salvation.

I said to her, That I perceived this Truth most clearly, that there was no Salvation without a Dependence upon God: asking, how I might now become ignorant of the Sciences which I had heretofore acquired, since I could not make my self now to have them.

She said: Sir, Nothing can hurt you, if all be subjected to God. You cannot be ignorant of what you know by means of your Studies: But you can submit all these Sciences to God, and look upon them as Ignorances, as in effect they are. Do not apply your Mind any longer to the Study of Sciences; and believe that they are all vain in respect of the Wisdom of God. You shall know that you are resigned to his Will <sup>(p)</sup> when you seek no longer for any thing upon Earth, neither Learning, nor Wisdom, nor a desire to know any other thing but what may render you well-pleasing to God. For he who is resigned to him without guile, is not moved with any thing but what concerns his Glory: No other thing touches him. Whether he be learned or ignorant, is all one to him. He makes use of Learning in what respects God's Glory, and not at all to rule on the Earth; knowing well that he who is resigned to God without Learning is as great as he who is so with much Learning. And even

— <sup>(n)</sup> Gal. I. 16. <sup>(o)</sup> Eccles. 37. 17, 18. <sup>(p)</sup> Psal. 73. 25, 26.

as one may be poor in Spirit, though he possesses Riches; so he may have much Learning, and yet for all this be simple in Spirit. When he submits all his Learning to God, he makes use of it as seems good to him: But as long as we think to profit by it, we are not yet become Children to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And since God makes appear to you, Sir, that there is no Salvation without this Dependance, let about it quickly, without considering whether you have Sciences or any other thing: Because God can make all work together for good. A Man must not regard himself; but the Will of God, who desires, that all Men, of what condition soever, keep themselves in a Dependance upon him, yielding up their Free-wills under his Power, without desiring to use them themselves.

I said to her, *That absolutely and irrevocably I resigned my self to God to be a true Child; but that I found yet some difficulty to forsake the Church.*

She said: Soft, soft, Sir, You must never renounce the Holy Church. Rather die than do so: You must only renounce the Abomination which is crept into the Roman Church now. Do you not see that she has falsified her Faith to her Lawful Husband Jesus Christ, and that she has not continued faithful to Him. I would be well pleased if you could shew me so much as one Point that she observes of the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, or so much as one thing that she practises which is not directly contrary to the Life and Doctrine of her Lawful Husband, who came down from Heaven to Earth to teach her them, both by Word and Deed: All which Things are despised by her who ought to be his Spouse. I have often spoke to you of her Excesses and her Adulteries. Would you yet hold her for the Holy Church since the Devil (q) has plac'd his Throne in her? What Weakness of Spirit is it, to feel a Repugnance to renounce a Thing so wicked, under frivolous Perswasions that she is Holy? When God gave us Understanding and Reason, this was for no other end, but to make us discern good from evil, that we might not perish blindfold: And now you would change the Designs of God by stifling your Reason and Under-

(q) 2 Theff. 2. 4.

standing that you may follow evil blindly : And when you see it so plainly evil you form some foolish Imagination that nevertheless it is good ! This must needs come from a pure Infatuation of Spirit : For even Natural Reason discovers to us manifestly enough that the Roman Church now is not the Spoule of Jesus Christ ; because she does not follow her Husband in any thing ; and two so distant Things cannot make an Alliance. How can you have a Repugnance to quit her who has abandoned her God ? If the Beasts and insensible Creatures, and all the Elements, did rise up against Man when he quitted his Dependance upon his God ; How should not Man, who is so reasonable, rise up against that Church, who has quitted the Dependance upon her God because she will not depend any longer but upon her self. One should rather have a Repugnancy to remain under her, than to quit her : Or else we have less Resentment of the Offence that is done our Creatour than the Elements and the Beasts, or inanimate Things, who have still resented the Wrong that was done their Creatour, even at the Death of Jesus Christ, (r) the Rocks rent, and the Sun was darkened. Have you less affection, Sir, for your God, than these Stones, that you do not resent the continual Injuries which the Church does to God ? If a beautiful Angel became a Devil for having desired in his Heart to be equal to God, what shall she become who prefers her self to the same God without desiring to give deference to him in any thing ? I do even bewail, Sir, your Blindness in this Point ; and I cannot believe that your Repugnancy proceeds from your Reasoning ; but from some Habitual Concern that you have for the Church : For if you applied your Understanding to consider the Original of this Repugnancy, you would see clearly that it proceeds from the pious affection that you have for the Church ; but that you do not take her where she is : For we amuse our selves in this, as in other Things, with Terms and Expressions of Men : And when we hear them call the *Roman Church, the Holy Church*, this Word begets in us an affection for her, without discovering, if it be she of whom they speak. When they would beguile a Child, and

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(r) *Matth. 27. 51.*



make him afraid of his Father, they put his Cloak and Hat upon a Stick in some obscure Place; which the Infant perceiving, believes it is truly he; and fears and respects him. But if he draw nearer, and take by the Cloak, he perceives easily that he is beguiled, and that what he took for his Father, was but a Piece of Wood. Truly, Sir, in the Darkness in which we live at present, they make us see just the like, by covering Rome with the Cloak of the Holy Church, and muffling her with the Head of Jesus Christ; we Fear and Reverence her, as if she were our True Mother the Holy Church, Authorised by Jesus Christ, and his Lawful Bride: But when we approach nearer, and lift up this Cloak, we shall see clearly, that 'tis nothing but Wood, instead of Holiness, which can be of no use to us, except to warm us in the Winter Season. Truly, Sir, we ought not to be so much Children in what regards our Eternal Salvation. We ought not to walk blindly in so important an Affair. If Men apply their Minds wholly to make a Stocking, or a Shoe, why should not we apply them more to save our Souls? It is good to have (s) the Simplicity of the Dove with respect to God: For he who is resigned to him, ought to do nothing but let himself be guided by him as a Little Child: But we must have the Prudence of the Serpent, to take heed of Men, who may deceive, or be deceived: And when they say, Lo the Holy Church, we must remark narrowly, if she be truly so, or if it be a Fagot covered with her Garment: It is for this only that God gave us Understanding, that we might still discern true Good from what is false, precisely in the matter of our Salvation: Because all other Things are vain and perishing, unworthy of a serious Application of Spirit; since it ought to apply it self only to Eternal Things, for which we were created: And our Misery arises from this that we make more serious Enquiries to discover the Turnings and Windings of the Affairs of the World than those of our Salvation. In which the Scripture has reason to say, that (u) the Children of this World are wiser than the Children of the Kingdom: Because before we engage in any Place, Office or Traffick, we still search narrowly if it is profitable:

(s) Mat. 10. 16. (t) 1 Cor. 10. 15. (u) Luke 16. 8. and

and advantagious for us: And we would take heed not to trust to Mens Words, or to believe blindly that a Thing is good without having first made the Experiment of it. If we have so much Foresight in what respects the Earth, how much more ought we to have it for that which respects Heaven? We trust our Salvation blindly to what they tell us that the *Roman Church* is our Mother the Holy Church; and we do not dive into this Affair which concerns us so much, to know, if really she has the Quality of our true Mother, and if she be allied with our true Father, who is unchangeable in all his Qualities, to whom this Spouse ought to be alwayes conformable. We must see if what they call our Mother, has the Spirit and the Works of our Father; and if we find no Likeness in her, we must renounce her, and hold her as a Deceiver and a Liar, unworthy of our Affection.

## The Twentieth and Seventh Conference,

*Shews, The true Marks whereby to discover where the True Church is, and that it concerns every one to examine it.*

I asked her, *How I might discover where my true Mother, the true Church is? What Marks there are whereby to know her, that I may not be deceived?*

She said: Sir, You shall discover her by this, that she will follow the Footsteps of Jesus Christ, and be wholly conformable to his Doctrine. There is but one (x) Church only, as there is but one only God; and there is so strait a Bond and Alliance between God and the Church, that they are but one and the same Thing, as it is said, that in

(x) Eph. 4. 15.

Marriage (y) Two are but one Flesh ; so in the Alliance of God with the Church, two are but one Spirit (z). God is the Bridegroom, and the Soul is the Bride. As it is said concerning Adam ; (a) Let us make a Companion meet for him, for it is not good that Man should be alone. This is the Figure of what he had said before, (b) Let us make Man after our own Likeness, because it was found meet that God should delight himself with something that was like to him. For this cause he created the Divine and Eternal Soul, and plac'd it in the Body and Understanding of Man, that it might multiply and communicate it self : For it is the Property of Good to be communicative. This Divine Soul being form'd in Time, must live for ever, else it should not have been Divine, nor capable of being united and ally'd to God, who created it for these ends. And as Adam and Eve ought to have been united in Heart, Body and Will ; so the Soul ought to be united in Love, Understanding, and Will with God ; Not that Natural Love, nor that Humane Understanding, no more than our bounded Will : Because all this has no Sympathy with God, and they are but the Case wherein God has shut up this Divine Soul, which is Free and Eternal, as God. This Divine Reason and Free-will, make the Church by the Alliance that God makes with it, which is much more strait than the Alliance that this Divine Soul makes with the Animal Soul of Man, which do so nearly approach one another, that no Humane Spirit is able to distinguish them, no more than any can distinguish the Free and Rational VWill from God himself : Because he has so straitly united them, that (c) the Soul is God, and God is the Soul ; as the VWill of Eve was that of Adam, so the VWill of the Soul is that of God. By which you may still discover, Sir, where the Spouse of God, or the True Church is : Because where she is to be found, she carries still along with her the same Qualities of her VVell beloved ; and when you do not find them in those who call themselves the Church, believe firmly that they are all Cheats : For the Spouse of God will be alwayes comely, and there can be no Blemish in her : Because she shall never be parted

(y) *Matth. 19. 5.* (z) *1 Cor. 6. 15.* (a) *Gen. 2. 18.*  
 (b) *Gen. 1. 26.* (c) *John 17. 23. 1 Cor. 6. 15.*

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from the Qualities of her Husband, alwayes Just, Good, True, and All-powerful. And when you shall see Sion, Jerusalem, Judea, or Rome, such as you call the Church, to be fallen away from these Qualities, never believe that she is your Mother the Holy Church. Upon these Accounts Jesus Christ has so often (d) warned you to beware of false Christs and false Prophets: For they come to delude and deceive many. Do not let your self be deluded, Sir: For there shall never be but one True Church, which shall be united to God: VVholoever has not this Unity, is not the Church; but they are Seducers of the People; who under this Cloak of God's Spouse, do seduce many. You must lift up your Head, and look on high, to see whence the Church took her Original; and you will perceive that the Church is no other but the Alliance that God made with the Divine Soul of Man, which he made his Spouse; though she was unworthy of it. He to ennoble her that he would joyn himself to her, and ally with her by an indissoluble Alliance, which can never end, for the Two Parties are Immortal, to wit, God and the Divine Soul: But to take for the Spouse of God Persons who are no wayes in the Spirit of God, nor in Union with him, and to reverence them as the Church, is to wrong the Honour that we owe to God. To see a Church seek the Honours, Pleasures, and Riches of this VVorld, and to believe that she is the Spouse of God; is to derogate from her Divine Quality, and to ascribe the Honour to Vice, that is due only to True Vertue. VVe should not thus let them cover our Eyes as they do to those who are going to be hanged that they may not see their doleful End. VVe must take off this Bandage, that we may look about us, and learn, where the True Church is, which can save us; and not suffer our selves to be led on blind-fold to Eternal Death by VVords or false Appearances; since Truth only is capable to save us.

I said to her, *That I had never yet discovered Souls united to God; and that nevertheless I believed I was in the Church?*

*She said:* Sir, You are deceived: For the Church is no where but in the Souls that are united to God; no more

(d) Mat. 7. 15. & 24. 4, 5, 11, 24, 25.



than a Woman can be the Spouse of a Man who has never approached her. We must not believe that the Church consists in wearing a Garment of Purple, or Red, or Fine Linnen. These are rather the Marks of the Reprobation of the (e) falsely Rich Man, who was buried in Hell, and the Scripture brings no other cause of his Damnation than these Fashions of Apparel, and that he was Rich, and a Feaster. If all these Things were Marks of his Damnation, why should they be now a dayes the Marks of the Holy Church? God is not changeable. He cannot now unite to himself what he then Reprobated and Condemned. No, no, Sir; the Spouse of God will never be vain, nor proud, nor polluted with any sin. For she (f) is all pure, Do not think that you are in the Church, when you are under Persons who seek Riches of this World; for such Souls are Adulteresses, and have abandoned their lawful Husband, and live in Adultery (g) with the Kings of the Earth. Which ought to make you abhor her, instead of cleaving to her. If you have never met with Souls resigned to God, you have never found the True Church: Because there never was any other, and never will be hereafter. She must notwithstanding be somewhere in the World, though she were but in one only Soul: Because the Works of God can never perish. He has made this Alliance with the Soul of Man, and he will never retract it. There have been in all Times some who have been his True Spouses, and resigned to him; but at present they are very rare. Strive, Sir, so to do as that yours may be so, and then you shall not need to seek the Church without you. For as soon as your Will is resigned to God, he unites it to himself, and makes your Soul his Spouse. Whether others whom you know be so or not, concerns you little: And though all the Souls of Men were God's Spouse, if yours be not, you lose all.

I asked her, *Whether God had not had a True Spouse still since the Creation of Adam; and if the People of Israel, the Jews, or the Christians, were not his Spouse?*

She said: Sir, There have been in all Times some Souls among these People, who were resigned to the Will of God. These in particular were the True Church; but

(e) Luke 16. 19. (f) Cant. 4. 7. (g) Rev. 17. 2.

not all that People : Though indeed they all called themselves the People of God, yet nevertheless they were not so : For it is said somewhere, *(h)* If you were the Children of *Abraham*, you would do the Works of *Abraham* : To shew, that all God's Children are not his Church or his Spouse ; but those only who do the Works of the Spouse : That is to say, who are joyned by a Renunciation of their Will to that of God. Those are the only Spouses of the same God.

This Alliance of God with Man was first of all made when Man was created. The Soul of *Adam* made an Alliance with God, and became his Spouse : But being afterwards in the Earthly Paradice, the Soul of *Adam*, though Divine, falsified its Faith to its Husband ; and instead of taking its delight only with its God, for whom it was created, it joyned it self in affection to the Creatures, and did eat of a Fruit of which God had forbidden him to eat. But as a good Husband does not still put away his Wife for One Fault that she has committed ; so also God, the Fountain of all Goodness, does not cast off the Soul of his Alliance, though he had but too much merited it. On the contrary he seeks Her, and calls upon Her to make her return to his Friendship. He cries, *(h)* *Adam*, where art thou ? As if he had said, Wherefore hast thou forsaken me ? He shews him also that he lov'd him, by covering him with a Garment, to lessen his Confusion ; and seeing he was ashamed and repented, God forgives him his Fault, and enjoynes him only a short Penance, to wit, That he should be deprived of his Presence, during this Life, during which he must labour for his Bread. But he does not at all break the Alliance he had made with him. His Soul remains still the Spouse of God, except that it is deprived for a certain time of its wonted sight of Him, being restored as to other things into his Grace and Friendship : For God will never destroy *(i)* the Works that he has made : And the Alliance he made with the Soul of Man was not broken off by his Sin : Because the Mercy of God *(l)* surpasses all his other Qualities. His Justice might have condemn'd Man ; and his Goodness ordains him only Penitence for his Sin : In which he shews

*(h)* *John* 8. 39. *(h)* *Gen.* 3. 9. *(i)* *Psal.* 138. 8. *(l)* *Psal.* 145. 9.

the Excesse of his Mercie and the Love he bears to Souls, leaving them all in *Adam* free to be his Spoufes, none excepted : For he could not forgive *Adam*, without forgiving all his Posterity. Because he held the Wills of all Men in his : And being yet but one Man only, and one Will only, he could not pardon one without another : For neither the Body, nor Will of *Adam* were divided, that one part might be pardoned, and another reprobated.

I spoke to you of this already, Sir ; but it seems you did not sufficiently conceive it. Therefore I cursorily repeat it, that I may the better shew you how God has always had a Spouse or Church : For if he had not forgiven *Adam*, none could have been the Spouse of God : Because all were become his Enemies by his sin : Which if they had continued to be, he would not have been so unjust as to thrust Man out of the Earthly Paradise, and oblige him to so hard a Penitence only to damn him at last, as Men now affirm, That God Reprobated some after the Sin of *Adam*. If this were true, he would certainly have confined them to Hell from the Moment of their Reprobation, instead of sending them yet into this World to produce a Perverse and reprobate Generation. God could not be good nor just in doing this : But really cruel and partial towards those Reprobates, who might justly murmur against him with more reason than the Labourers (m) who received no more for the Work of a whole Day, than they who had wrought but for One, Two or Three Hours : For they had no reason ; because they received what was due to them, and what they had agreed for ; but these Reprobated have Laboured as much as those Elect, since they have all equally performed the Penitence enjoined to *Adam*. And if the Father of the Family gives as much to the Last Comers as to the First, it is not that he is partial, or that he favours one more than another ; but that he exercises his Goodness towards the Last because they had been no sooner called to Work, of which they themselves complain, saying, *Lord, No body has employed us.* So that God exercises towards them both Goodness and Justice. But if out of the Masse of *Adam* he had fore-ordained some Elect, and others Reprobate ; he should

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(m) *Matth.* I. I, 15.

have done against both the one and the other of these Qualities. Which he cannot do : And the Goodness and Mercy of God (*n*) spreading themselves alwayes over all his Works ; he did assuredly Elect and Pardon all Men in general in *Adam* : So that after him all they who will resign their Free-will to his, are all his Spouses and his Church. Therefore in all Times and in all Ages he has still had a Church upon Earth, and will have till all Evil be at an end. Since *Adam*, many Souls have been resigned to the Will of God, as he himself was after his Sin, having never more re-taken their own Free-will, but left it still to be governed by God, subjecting themselves voluntarily to the Penitence that was enjoyn'd him. These have been the Church and the Spouses of God. *Adam*, *Eve*, and their Children until they had the use of their Reason, were the First Church ; and afterwards *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, and others who in like manner resigned their Will to God were at that Time the Second Church ; and thus going on from Time to Time, this Church has always continued, either of many Souls united to the Will of God, or of few. This makes nothing to the first Design, that God had to Ally himself with the Soul of Man. It is still his Spouse though there were but one Soul only, as there was but one when *Adam* was created alone. This Number of many only makes those Blessed who are of the Number : For God on his part, takes as much delight with one Soul only that is resigned to Him as He would do with a Hundred Millions : For there is nothing to do with Quantity when the Business is about Quality. If an Hundred Millions of Souls are resigned to God, they make altogether but one only Church, which could consist as well in one Soul only, as in this great Number : Because the Spouse of God (*o*) is One : And as in Nature a Man may have as much Contentment in Marrying a Wife who is Little and Tender, as one that is Big and Lumpish : Without comparison God is as much Honoured, though there were but one Soul only in the World that were resigned to him, as if all Men in general were so ; who only can receive themselves the Honour of their Happiness, every one for his own particular ; For nothing can

(*n*) *Psal.* 145. 9. (*n*) *Cant.* 6. 9. (*o*) *John* 17. 21, 23.



be taken away nor added as to God, who is and comprehends all Things. His Alliance that he has made with the Soul of Man, is not encreas'd or diminished by the great or small Body of his Church. He will still have his Spouse, with whom he will take his delight in the kind that he created, which was but one Man alone. She shall

still be preserved as the Rose among Thorns. How wicked soever the World may become his Church will still remain there in her kind. The Church will always have her Beauty and her Qualities, as much in one Soul alone as in an Hundred Millions, which altogether would make (p) but one, no more than if there were but one alone. After this manner God in all Ages has had his Church upon Earth: But in how many Souls it consisted, is known only to God. The People of Israel were called the People of God, among whom there were assuredly Souls resigned unto him. These made up the Church in their Time, and no others. Even so among the Jewish People, and also the Catholicks. The Church of God has always been among them, since Gods Alliance with Man could never fail: But to believe that all that Masse of People who call'd themselves the People of God were the Church, is to deceive our selves: Because there never will be any other but the Souls which of their Free-will do resign themselves to the Will of God. All others are only Carnal and Material Churches.

I said to her, *That we strayed much, and greatly erred, in believing that all who are called the People of God do make up the Church, and that at present she consisted of Christendom, which Jesus Christ authorised, and said, that (r) what she did on Earth, should be done in Heaven.*

She said: Sir, Men are blind, and walk where they see nothing. I believe that the Spouse of God resides among Christian People, though it were no more but in one Soul alone: But to believe that this Church consists of that great Number of Persons who are called Christians, is greatly to deceive our selves: Because of them God may say truly, (s) *My People have forsaken me*: Which appears by the whole Behaviour of these Christians now,

(g) 2 Cor. 2. 6. 17, 18. (r) Matth. 16. 19. (s) Jer.

who live wholly as if there were no God, every one being so wedded to his own Will, as if it had only been given him to satisfy himself; and using the Authority that God gave his Church as if they were Sovereigns and independent upon him. All which things are inconsistent with the Spouse of God, which moves not but by the Motion of her Husband, of whom she knows she holds all things, and she never ascribes any thing to her self. How should this Masse of Christians compose the Church, since among them we do not observe almost any who will resign their Wills to the Will of God? And those who make their Profit of the Authority that Jesus Christ gave his Church are Robbers, and take what belongs to another: For when Jesus Christ said: *Whatsoever you shall do here on Earth I will do in Heaven*, He spoke to his Spouse, and not to his Enemies, as those Persons are who cleave to their own Wills, who do very impertinently usurp the Title of the Church, or Spouse of God: For his True Spouse is in nothing contrary to her Husband: Being united by a Holy and Divine Will: So that they cannot disclaim one another, and therefore what she shall do on Earth shall be done also in Heaven, by their Unity of Wills, which are still conformable: Though this Will be wrapt up in the Spirit and Body of the Spouse which is yet on Earth, it is nevertheless united to that of her Husband which is in Heaven: And therefore what the one does, the other approves: Because one and the same thing cannot be against it self.

I said to her: *That this Quality of Union of Will to that of God, was a Divine Thing, and invisible to Bodily Eyes; asking her, how I might discover and know the True Church and Spouse of God?*

She said: Sir, You will perceive it sufficiently, even by the Eyes of the Body, if you seriously apply your Spirit to discover her Qualities: For St. John in his Revelation paints out all her Qualities, under the Figure of a Woman who sits in the Sun, and has the Moon under her Feet, and upon her Head Twelve Stars. This Woman is the True Church, and the only Spouse of God. She is first seated in the Sun, that is, that the Spouse of God reposes

h. B.

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*h. B. on p. 1. See p. 40, 72. & 142. Proving  
 of the Power of Grace. p. 6 & 30*

poses alwayes in the Light of Truth, and never turns aside from it; that she does not walk therein as a Passenger, but sits in it as in her Place of Repose. Secondly, that she has the Moon under her Feet: That is, that all Things that are mutable and changeable as the Moon, such are the Goods, the Riches, the Honours and Pleasures of this World, are a'l trod under feet by the Church or Spouse of God. Thirdly, That she bears on her Head Twelve Stars: These are the Twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit, with which the Spouse of God is still inseparably adorned, because the Spirit of God where he resides is never barren: There he always brings forth his Fruits, and there also he still bestows his Gifts. By which, Sir, you may sufficiently discover in what Soul the Church resides. If you do not find all this Furniture, never believe blindly that the Church is in those who do not possess these Qualities or Conditions, which are the True Marks of the Church, without which you can never own that she is the True Spouse of God: For these Marks are inseparable from Her; and where you shall not find them, you must immediately desist from believing that you have found the Church: Because there can be nothing but Delusion where they say she is without these Qualities: For she never goes without them. And therefore be not amused, though they say to you, This is the Church here, or there. Do not believe it; no more than if they said to you, (u) Lo here is Christ, or there; go not out: For where ever He is, He operates all these Verrues with which you see the Woman in the Revelation is adorned.

I said to her, That if all these Qualities were required in the Spouse of God; I must ingenuously declare, that I do not know the Church: Because I know no Body who has these Qualities of the Woman in the Revelation; and that the Roman Church was directly opposite thereto.

She said: Sir, So far as you see the Roman Church opposite to them, so far you see her removed from being the Spouse of God, which never goes (x) without these Ornaments. She is always true, and these Romanists are in many Lyes. They often condemn Saints for Hereticks: And if they knew me, I should be in the same condem-

(u) *Matth.* 24. 23. (x) *Psal.* 45. 10, 14, 15.

nation. For they cannot endure the Truth that reproveth them; but they would continue to Rule as the Spouse of God, though they have quitted the Truth, saying; VVhat they bind and loose, shall be so done in Heaven: Even as if they had continued the Spouse of God, and united to his Will! From which they are far removed: For they have nothing before their Eyes but their own Glory. They are also very far from having the Moon under their Feet: For Honour pleases them; and they wear it rather on their Head, than tread it under Feet; and they delight in Pleasures, of which they will not deprive themselves; as far as they can possess them, they will not put them under their Feet; no more than Riches, which they carry rather in their Hearts than make them their Footstool. By which you may assuredly judge that the Church of God cannot reside there; but the Whore, who has falsified her Faith to her Lawful Husband: For while she bears the Name of the Church, she lives in continual Adulteries, which she knows how to cover so well with Things lawful and permitted, that it seems to all who have no good Judgment, that these Whoredoms are Vertues. Must not one have lost his Judgment if he have a Repugnance to quit this Infamous Strumper, who has for so long time by-gone wallowed in all sort of Filthiness under the colour of Holiness, and of the Spouse of God, without having discovered her Infamies, which would be so manifest to all the VVorld if they had removed that Bandage of blind Obedience which has so closely shut their Eyes? If you know none, Sir, who has the Qualities of the VVoman in the Revelation, you may say in truth that you do not know the Church; and pray to God that he may let you know Her.

The



## The Twenty Eight and Last Conference,

Teaches that all the Lawes, as well that of Nature, as that of Moses, and of the Gospel, are only true Means to attain to a Dependance of our Will upon that of God: That this is the old Leaven which the Woman took and put into three Measures of Meal which are these Three Laws given by God in divers Times, which Jesus Christ compares in his Parable to Three Measures of Meal, and that a Woman now takes this Old Leaven of Dependance upon God to put it into these Three Laws, that it may leaven the whole Lump, and make Bread of it for the Nourishment of Gods Children.

I asked her, How I should behave my self, since I knew not the Church, which I ought to follow and love?

3. B. She said: Sir, The Gospel is your Mother; because it proceeded from the Wildom of God, this is what you ought to follow, without seeking for an imaginary Church among Men, The Word of God is the Nourishment of our Soul: The Doctrine of Jesus Christ is the Rule that we must follow to become the Spouse of God. This is the Seed that begets that Spouse. Do not search (y) through the Streets or Corners of the City for your Well-beloved; for you will be beaten by the Souldiers that stand there. Enter into this Clofet and Doctrine of the Gospel; and there you will find the Nourishment of your Soul, and the Means of abandoning your self to God to be his

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True Spouse, and his Holy Church, which is the same thing. The Spouse of God is the Church, and the Church is the Spouse of God; and nothing can be it but they who have abandoned their Free-will to the Will of God. Therefore I conjure you never to rye your self to any other Thing: For God still forms his Spouses by (z) his Word. When *Adam* offended, he re-called him by his Word; which being by him heard and followed, he thereby returned into a Dependance upon God. And all the World having shaken off their Dependance upon God, he preserved *Noah* and his Family therein by his Word; which being heard and followed, they were saved from the Waters of the Deluge: And the Children of *Israel* who heard this Word, and followed it, escaped the being drowned in the Red-Sea: And those among the *Jews* who heard the Words of *Jesus Christ* became his Spouses: Whom we also may imitate: Because the same Word is left us in Writing, and we may become the Church, or Spouse of God, if we will hear and follow it. We need not turn here or there; but rather take the Thing in its Source, and see the Obligation we have of being resigned to God; and having through our Perverseness quitted this SELF-RESIGNATION, the Means of recovering it are marked out in the Gospel, which *Jesus Christ* has brought us upon Earth. It is this, Sir, that you must follow.

I said to her, *That Jesus Christ in his Gospel had not directly taught this Dependance of our Will upon that of God, as she deduc'd it.*

*She said:* That *Jesus Christ* had no other Scope in all his Doctrines but to bring back the Soul of Man into that Dependance upon God, from whence he had turned away; and that if he taught any other Thing it was only to discover to Men the Things they had done, or might do in Time coming, which hindred this Dependance: For otherwise, He would never have taught any other Thing, but that we ought directly to subject our Will to that of God: But seeing He found Men so far from this Dependance; and that they were distracted from it by so many different Means, it was necessary that He should let them see in particular the Things that withdrew them from

(z) 1 Pet. I. 22.

this Dependance upon God: For they had Lorded it with their own Wills, therefore he tells them, that (a) *they who do not deny themselves cannot be his Disciples*, that no Body might flatter himself in believing he might be saved though he should follow his own Will: And seeing that every one set their Affections upon the perishing Goods of this World, he sayes to them, (b) *Sell all that you have, and follow me*: Because he knew no Body could be resigned to God while their Affections were set on Earthly Things: Because the Love of God is incompatible with the Love of Riches. And seeing that Men had such Natural Affections towards Father and Mother, Sisters, or Brethren, or Lands and Houses, he sayes, (c) *He that quits all these things for my Name, shall have a hundred fold and Life everlasting*: To make us understand, that he who should abandon all these things, would be well disposed to resign himself to the Will of God, which Self-resignation would assuredly give him Life Eternal. Thus of all the other Evangelical Counsels. They were taught for no other end but to discover to Man all these Things which might remove him from this **SELF-RESIGNATION**. For if it had not been necessary to make known all these Things in particular by which Man was entirely withdrawn from God; He himself would not have come upon the Earth; but would have caused tell by some Prophet in few Words, That to be saved Man must resign his Will to that of God; as he had often spoke in this manner in past Times by the Mouth of his Prophets. But the Compassion of God was so abundant towards the Misery of Sinners that He resolves to become Man Himself, that he might palpably teach him all he must do and avoid to attain to this **RESIGNATION** of our Will to that of God, which was the only Thing essentially necessary: For all the Commands of God, all the Prophets, and the Doctrine of the Gospel are no other thing but Voices which cry, *That to be saved we must resign our Will to that of God*, though by accident they teach the particular Means to attain to this **Self-Resignation**. I advise you, Sir, to take up in their plain Literal Sence these Counsels of the Gospel, which

(a) Luke 14. 26. (b) Matth. 19. 21. (c) Matth. 19. 29.

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will certainly make you attain to this so much desired Dependance upon God ; for they are given only to serve as most profitable Means to bring us to this End. Remember alwayes that this is the First and Only Commandment that God gave us, and the only End for which we are created : For if we have not resigned our Will to the Will of God, we can never be his Spouses, nor take our delight with him : Because our Self-will does alwayes resist His, and can never enter in a perfect Union, since it only aims at and respects the Earth ; and the Will of God only tends to and aims at Eternal Things. There can never be a Sympathy and Relemblance between Two so distant Objects, as Time and Eternity are. By which you may see, Sir, that all the Doctrine of Jesus, with all the other Laws, have no other Scope, but to make Men return to a Dependance upon God, after they have turned away from it. And though Jesus Christ does not say directly that to be saved we must thus depend upon God ; yet He sayes it indirectly by His Words and Works : since they shew what we must do and avoid to attain to this Dependance, which is the only Essential Commandment.

I said to her, *It was very desirable that all the Men of the World should hear this Lesson, That to be saved we need only resign our Free-will to God : That it were good to lay aside all these other Means of Salvation, Precepts and Laws, even that of the Gospel.*

*She said :* It were very good, Sir, that all the World knew that only Dependance upon God is necessary to Salvation ; that no Body might any longer take the Means for the End : But to lay aside all Laws, and even that of the Gospel, is not at all advisable : Because God did not give them unprofitably ; but as True Means that lead to this Dependance. Make a little Experiment on your self, Sir, to see if you can come to this Dependance without any Means. I fear greatly you should come too short to leap so far all at one Leap. If you do it effectually, in a good time : you have no need of other Things ; but you must take good heed, that you be not deceived : Because we are ordinarily enclined to believe well of our selves. One will sometimes think he is resigned to God when yet he has still some Earthly Affection. For this cause it is better to make a Tryal of it : For you cannot tell if your Affections be set upon your Parents, Friends,

Land,



Land, House, Wealth, if you cannot quit them without Trouble. This would be as a Touchstone if you feel your Heart so disingaged from all these Things, that you can willingly lose them: For in effect, when a Soul is truly resigned unto God, all these Things are a Burthen to it, and become often a Hindrance; and in his Heart he wishes to be delivered from them, if such were the Will of God: But so long as he does not truly feel these Dispositions in the Bottom of his Soul, it were better for him to embrace every one of the Evangelical Counsels, and to force himself to practice them: Not as the End; but as the true Means that lead to the End. If we understood aright the Commandments of God, the First of all is, To love God with all our Heart. This LOVE is that necessary DEPENDANCE, to which we will not submit but by this Love. For to Depend, to Love, and to Adore God, or to be Resigned to Him, is all the same Thing. We can never resign our selves to God, without loving and esteeming Him, and also we cannot love and adore Him without resigning our selves to Him, since He desires it: For we willingly give our selves to Him whom we love and honour. So that the observing the Commandments of God does certainly lead us to this Self-Resignation, as the Counsels of the Gospel do also; for he that denies himself and all that he possesses, must of necessity depend upon God: Because our Heart cannot be without loving something; and if we no longer love any Created Thing, we shall certainly love our Creator, and if we love Him, we shall voluntarily resign our selves unto Him. So that he who observes the Commands of God and the Evangelical Law, is certainly resigned to the Will of God; and he who lives in this Self-Resignation, does assuredly observe the Commandments of God, and the Doctrine of the Gospel, even though he should not Cull them out in particular, and should not fix precisely upon each of them. But the Misery of Men now is, that they neither do the one nor the other. They do not observe the Commandment of loving God with all their Heart, nor yet the Evangelical Counsels. And in the mean time they are all ready to raise Quarrels and Disputes about this Word Dependance, because it is not precisely set down in the Scripture: As if our Salvation depended upon Words and Terms, and not upon the Essence of the Thing, which in it self comprehends

comprehends all the Terms that can signifie it: For when it is said that our Will must be subjected and depend upon that of God, it is as much as if they said, that we must observe the Commandments of God, and also the Counsels of the Gospel: Because both of these consist in the Resignation of our Will to God. But Men are so degenerate in this Age, that they are enclined more to dispute than to discover the Essence of that which is necessary for their Salvation. If this were not the Unhappiness of Men now, no Body would call in question whether Man ought to resign his Will to that of God if he desire to be saved: Because there is nothing more reasonable, nor better, nor more just, than that a Creature resign himself to the Will of its Creatour, and depend upon him from whom it has received All.

I said to her, *That there was no debate to be made about so certain Truths: That every one ought to submit their Judgment to this Dependance upon God, which assuredly was necessary in all Ages and under all Laws.*

*She said:* Sir, Man has nothing in him that is worthy of God but his Divine Soul, which consists in Reason, and Free-will: And if we do not yield it up to the Will of God, what is it that we can offer or give Him? He has no need of Gold, or Silver or Land, or Flesh, or any Thing that is Natural: Because his Being is wholly Divine. He could not therefore demand any other thing of Man but this Reason and Free-will: As in effect he has not demanded, and will not demand any other thing. When he said in his Commandments, that we must not Kill, nor Steal, and so forth, this was only to draw Man from his Self-love, which led him to all these Things: And when He taught so particularly by the Gospel what we ought to do and avoid, it was because Man followed his own Will in so many divers things: It was needful to point out to him every particular wherein he went astray, and that for this End only, that he might return to this Dependance upon the Will of God: For otherwise, many Things that Man had were not evil in themselves, as Father, Mother, Brother, Sisters, Lands, Houses, Riches; all which Things might be very well posselt, if there were a Dependance of his Will upon that of God. For God did not forbid them by the Ten Commandments; because Men were not then so absolutely Masters of their own Wills

Wills as they became since, for they are not satisfied now to use and follow their own Wills during some Passion of Anger, or Swearing, or the like; but they follow them in all Things, loving Father, Mother, and the rest, out of pure Self-love: For if this were not Self-love, Jesus Christ would draw no Body from it: since he sayes, That we ought to love our Neighbour as our selves: And several other times he exhorts, that we *(d)* love one another: By which it appears evidently that he would only hinder us from following our Self-will in all these Things: because all sorts of Sins consist in the following our own Wills; as all Vertue consists in resigning our Will to that of God.

These are the Two Things which can Save and Damn us: Though they be explained all at length by the Doctrine of the Gospel, yet they are all abridged by *the resigning of our own Will to God; or by the following our own Will*. In this all Good and Evil does consist: Of which we are free to make a Choice, and to follow the one or the other. For there is no Salvation without resigning our Will to God, and no Damnation without following our own Will. Let them grow old in Study, and turn over all the Books of the World, and let them treasure up all the Sciences, they can never find a Truth more clear, than, *That all Vertues and Salvation consist in the Resignation of our Will to that of God; and that, All Sins and Damnation consist in following our own Will*. This is an Eternal Truth which will never change. Every one should lay it to Heart because it concerns him: For it is a general Rule, that respects every one, Rich, Poor, Learned, Ignorant. Let us Work, and Fast, and Pray, and do all that we can; if withal we follow our own Will, assuredly we shall be damned: And on the other hand, Let us take rest, and Eat, and Drink, and do every other thing in a Dependance upon the Will of God, we shall certainly be saved: For God has nothing to do with the Offerings of Metals, but that of our Free-will, which he has reserved for himself: Of which he gave a Figure by the forbidding Adam to eat of One Tree only; Jesus Christ gave us this Conclusion also when after so many Instructions he said, *(e)* I came not to do mine own Will, but the Will of him that sent me. If

(d) John 13. 34. (e) John 6. 38.

Jesus Christ himself, who was the Word of God, lays down his own Will, and sayes that he came not into this World to follow it, but that of his Father; what then ought to be done and said by the Reasonable Creature who desires to save its Soul, since it is the Will of God that it should be saved? Nevertheless it will not be saved without this **Self-RESIGNATION.**

I said to her, *That I wish'd from the Bottom of my Soul, that never any Body had taught any other thing but the Dependance that we owe to God; since in truth all is comprehended in it.*

She said: Sir, I hope your Wish shall very shortly be accomplished, because Jesus Christ promised it by a Parable where it is said: (f) *That the Kingdom of Heaven is like to Leaven which a Woman took, and put into Three Measures of Meal till the whole was leavened.* And because now we are not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, God makes us to understand all that he said in former Times by Parables, for then the Time was not come to make these Things be manifestly understood, because the World who then liv'd did not see the Things signified by all these Parables. But at present, we are arrived at the end (g) of the Last Times, and (h) shall see the Things fulfilled which are uttered by Similitudes. He sayes first, *That the Kingdom of Heaven is like to Leaven, which a Woman took;* as if he had said, The Kingdom of Heaven will be proclaimed by a Woman, who taking the Old, the First and only Essential Commandment OF RESIGNING OUR WILL to that of God, she will put it in the Law of Nature, and in the Written Law, and in the Evangelical Law; which are the Three Measures of Meal; and that God sent his Word, these Three several Times, to serve for Bread and Nourishment to our Souls. And it seems this Word, though sent after different wayes, has not been converted into Bread; because so few have nourished their Souls by it; and this Food has remained in the Meal even till now. Very few resigned themselves to God, during the Law of Nature; since at the Time of the Deluge, Noah only with his Family were saved, and only (i)

(f) *Matth* 13. 33. (g) *1 Cor.* 10. 11. (h) *Jer.* 31. 24.  
(i) *1 Pet.* 3. 20.



Eight Persons of all the World escaped the Flood. And in the Written Law how few also were abandoned to God? Since *Moses* so suddenly broke (l) the Stone because he saw that few would observe the Commandments which were written in it. And in the Gospel-Law, how few have followed the Word of God? Twelve Apostles: Among whom one forsook it to go hang himself; and some Disciples, among whom divers (m) also abandoned Jesus Christ. So that this Divine Word has served for Nourishment for few Persons. But in the Fulness of Time in which we enter at present, this Divine Word shall have its full (n) effect, and the Holy Spirit (o) shall be poured out upon all Flesh, Young and Old, Great and Small, so that all shall Prophecie, and speak Languages, and do more Wonders (p) than *Moses* did with all the Ancient Prophets, who altogether were but (q) Figures of the Things figured which we shall see very shortly come to pass, which will be more perfect than all that the Apostles and their Disciples did, yea even Jesus Christ himself; because we are arrived at the Fulness of Time, of which the Apostles says, (r) *That they shall understand and prophecie in full perfection.* What they only did in part, shall be in Fulness and Accomplishment; because then (u) all Men in general who shall remain on the Earth shall subject their Wills to that of God, who will govern (x) them according to his pleasure and without the contradiction of their own Wills. Then there will be no longer need of (y) Laws, no more Constrains, no more Commands, no more Churches of Stone, no more Sacraments, no more Prayers, no more Desires and Aspirations, because the Souls of all Men shall be filled with the Will of God, and shall have nothing more to ask Him by Prayer, nor have any more need of the Sacraments to obtain his Graces, which are all contained in the Accomplishment of his Will, which will operate in them without having need to go to Church, their Soul being the True Temple where the Will of God

(l) *Exod.* 32. 19. (m) *John* 6. 66. (n) *Isa.* 55. 10, 11.  
 (o) *Joel* 2. 28. (p) *Isa.* 33. (q) *1 Cor.* 10. 6. & *2 Cor.*  
 3. 7, 11. *Heb.* 10. 1. (r) *1 Cor.* 13. 9. (s) *Joh.* 14. 12.  
 (t) *1 Cor.* 13. 10, 12. (u) *Fer.* 31. 3, 4. *Zach.* 13. 8, 9.  
 (x) *Isa.* 33. 2. *Zach.* 14. 9. (y) *Fer.* 31. 34. *Rev.* 21. 22.  
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resides, which has no need of Law or Commandment, the Will of God being a Law to it self, by Pure Love, without any constraint. Lo this is the Estate of Blessed Souls who shall enter into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. This (2) is that Hidden Treasure of the Kingdom of Heaven, and he that discovers it ought to sell all that he has to obtain it. It is to be bought very easily. There is no need of being Rich or of Noble Blood: No need of Learning many Languages, nor of passing the Degrees of the Schools and Universities: No need to enter into Cloysters of strict Observance, nor to crush the Body with hard Discipline, Watchings, Fastings and other Bodily Mortifications: No need to learn to Read, Write, or any other Curious Art: Nor yet is there need of perusing so many Spiritual Books with which the World is now full, which Teach so many Methods of Perfection, so many Steps to ascend to Vertue, so many Means to find God. No, Sir, all these Things are not necessary; because there is but ONE THING ONLY so, which is, TO RESIGN OUR WILL TO THE WILL OF GOD. Lo this is the Leaven that leavens the whole Lump of the Law of Nature, that of the Jews and that of the Gospel: Because this Subjection of our Will to God comprehends all in it, and gives us an Entry into the Kingdom of Heaven. Lo this is all I have to say to you, and bid you Adieu for ever, Remaining your very Affectionate in a Dependence on the Will of God.

At Macklin Sept. 15.

1667.

ANTHOINETTE BOURIGNON.

(2) Matth. 13. 44.

Luke xxj. 5. I will give you a Mouth and Wisdom which they who shall rise up against you shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

Chap. x. 18. I beheld Satan falling from Heaven as Lightning.

THE END

Of the Third and Last Part of The LIGHT of the World.



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FINIS.

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